SUPERMAN

Post-CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS

Volume 32:

Strangers in Paradise

"A MYSTERIOUS ISLAND. A UTOPIA. AMAZONS. THE WORKS OF VERNE, THOREAU, AND HOMER ARE ABOUT TO COME ALIVE FOR A SELECT GROUP OF PEOPLE.

"FOR MORE ON THIS STORY, WE GO NOW TO RONNIE SARASKY, LIVE AT THE UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK."

"THANKS, PAT. SHE CAME FROM A PARADISE BEYOND OUR JADED REALITY, BRINGING WITH HER THE AGES-OLD DREAM OF PEACEFUL, HUMANE COOPERATION BETWEEN NATIONS.

"SOME HAVE CALLED HER A MESSIAH. OTHERS, A WITCH. THE MEDIA LABELED HER WONDER WOMAN. SHE IS PRINCESS DIANA, AMBASSADOR FROM THEMYSCIRA...

"...AND TODAY THE AMBASSADOR'S MISSION TO FORGE PAST AND PRESENT INTO THE FUTURE TOOK ITS FIRST TODDLING STEPS FORWARD...

"...AS ELEVEN OF THE TWELVE REPRESENTING THE TWENTIETH CENTURY WERE ANNOUNCED BY U.N. DELEGATE **ASMUND LINDEL** OF **NORWAY**, HIMSELF ONE OF THE CHOSEN.

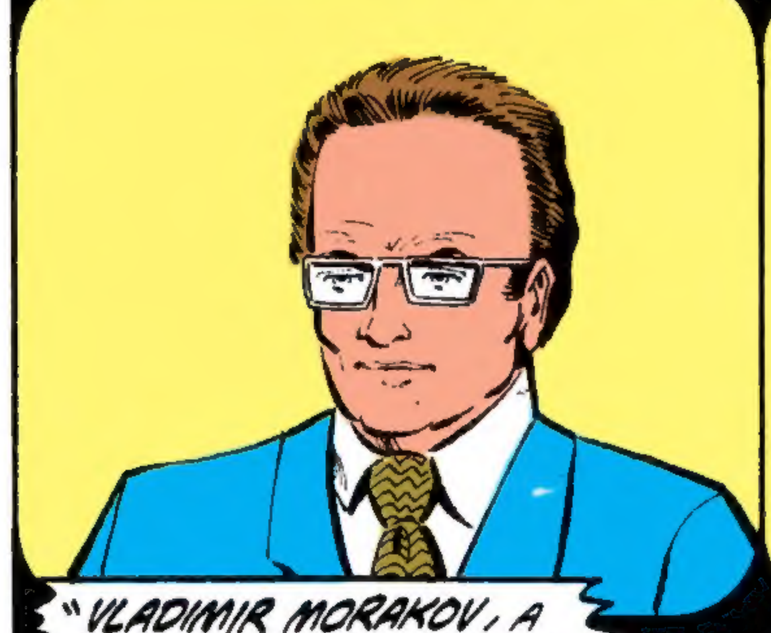
"LINDEL'S SELECTION WAS BY GENERAL ASSEMBLY VOTE, WITH NOTICEABLE ABSTENTIONS FROM ITALY AND SOUTH AFRICA, AND LOUD PROTESTS FROM MOSLEM FUNDAMENTALIST NATIONS LED BY IRAN.

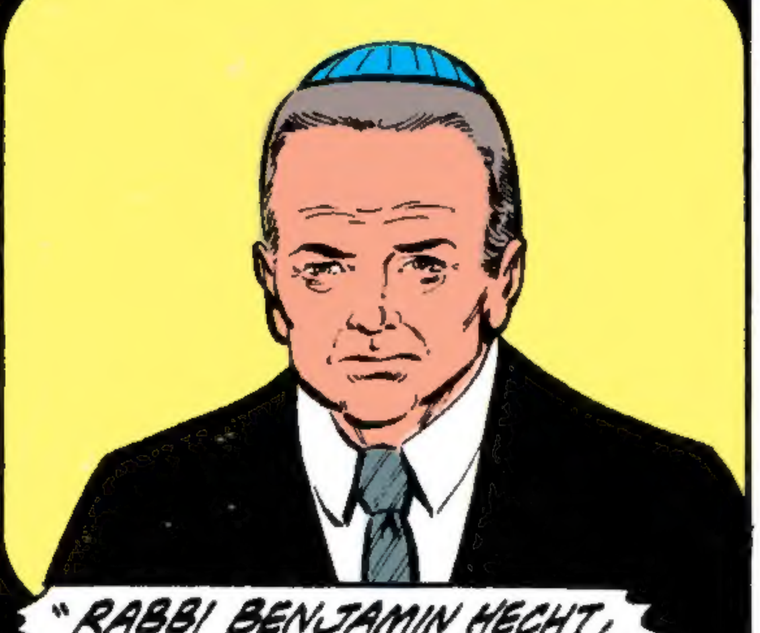
"SOUTH AFRICAN EXPATRIATE AND BOTANIST **MARITZA NITUMBE**, OUTSPOKEN APARTHEID OPPONENT WHOSE PARENTS WERE ACTIVE, WITH ALAN PATON, IN THE FORMATION OF THE LIBERAL PARTY...

"THE OTHER TEN WERE HANDPICKED BY WONDER WOMAN AND HER PERSONAL ADVISOR, PROFESSOR JULIA KAPATELIS OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY. THEY ARE:

"...BANNED BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT IN 1968--

"AMERICAN FEMINIST AUTHOR AND SOCIOLOGIST **PHYLLIS HALLER**, WHOSE RECENT BOOK, "THE TEARS OF GAEA" TOPPED THE N.Y. TIMES BEST-SELLER LIST FOR 48 WEEKS--





"VLADIMIR MORAKOV, A **RUSSIAN** NEUROSURGEON WHO HAS VOLUNTEERED FOR THE JOURNEY THROUGH THE AUSPICES OF GORBACHEV'S COMMITMENT TO GLASNOST--

"HISTORY TEACHER AND BRITISH WAR VETERAN **ROBERT CANTWELL** OF **SCOTLAND**, WHOSE BATTALION WAS ORDERED TO BUILD THE FAMED BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI--

"RABBI **BENJAMIN HECHT**, PARTICIPANT IN EARLY DISCUSSIONS WITH WONDER WOMAN CONCERNING THE PAGAN ASPECTS OF HER MYTHIC GREEK PHILOSOPHY--

"UNITARIAN MINISTER THE REVEREND ALAN WITHERSPOON. REV. WITHERSPOON AND RABBI HECHT WERE THE ONLY TWO RELIGIOUS LEADERS TO RESPOND TO WONDER WOMAN'S INVITATION.

"LIN KOO TENG, 15-YEAR-OLD SURVIVOR OF TIENANMEN SQUARE AND THE PURGE WHICH FOLLOWED.

"ROVO QUASHI OF ETHIOPIA. ROVO WAS BLIND FROM BIRTH. HIS MOTHER WORKS IN THE DISPLACED PERSONS CAMPS AS A RED CRESCENT VOLUNTEER--

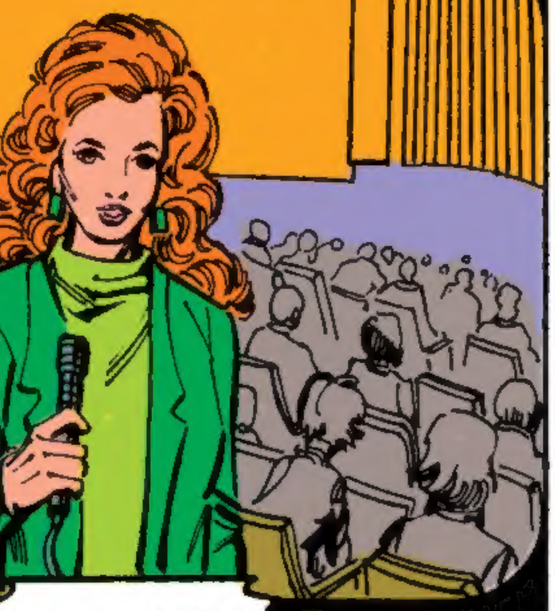
"THE VATICAN HAS REMAINED SILENT. SPECULATION IS THAT FEAR OF PAPAL REPRISAL INFLUENCED ITALY'S ABSTENTION IN THE U.N. VOTE--

"SHE CREDITS THIS APPOINTMENT TO CHINA'S DESIRE TO EARN THE AMAZONS OF THEMYSCIRA'S GOOD WILL. SHE HOPES THEY WILL NOT BE TAKEN IN BY THIS DUPLICITY--

"CANADIAN ARCHITECT HENRI CLAUDE TIBET, RECIPIENT OF THE I.M. PEI AWARD FOR HIS DESIGNS INCORPORATING FORM AND FUNCTION WITH THE NEEDS OF THE PHYSICALLY DISABLED.

"THE HAITIAN ZOOLOGIST AND ANTHROPOLOGIST FELIX ZUMAC, WHO IS NOT SURE WHY HE WAS CHOSEN, IS THE ELEVENTH DELEGATE.

"ONLY WONDER WOMAN KNOWS WHO HE OR SHE IS. RUMORS ARE CIRCULATING THAT IT IS TO BE A JOURNALIST--



"MR. TIBET, A PARAPLEGIC, HAS EXPRESSED CURIOSITY AS TO HOW THE AMAZONS, PERFECT PHYSICAL SPECIMENS, WILL REACT TO HIS AND ROVO QUASHI'S PHYSICAL IMPERFECTIONS--

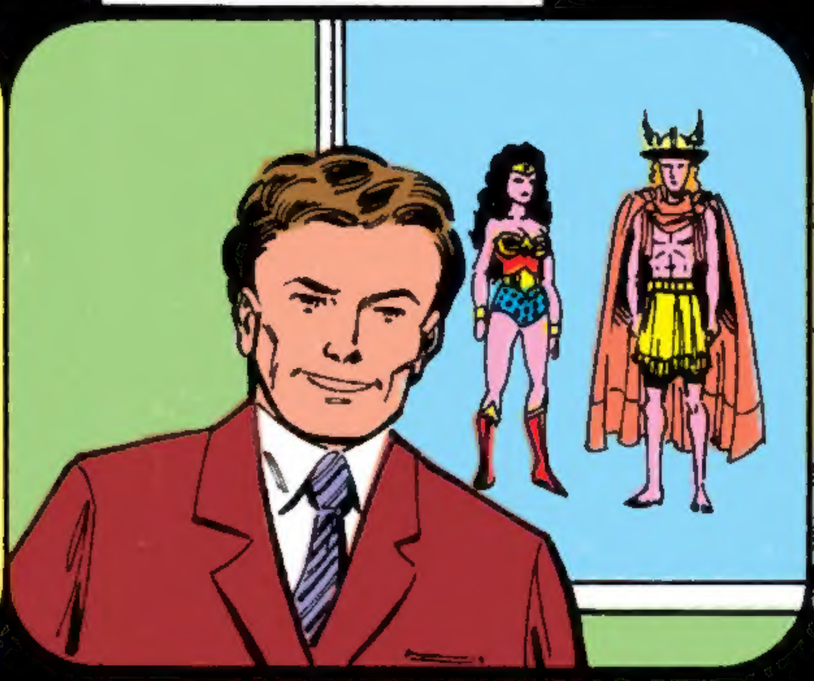
"AND THE TWELFTH DELEGATE?

"AND PAT?"

"YES, RONNIE?"

"THANK YOU, RONNIE. I'VE GOT MY LUCKY AGGIE IN MY POCKET. IN RELATED NEWS--

"HOWEVER, HE HAS NOT BEEN SEEN FOR A NUMBER OF WEEKS. WE TAKE YOU NOW TO BEACON HILL...



"THIS JOURNALIST IS KEEPING HER FINGERS CROSSED. RONNIE SARASKY, WHGP NEWS, BOSTON."

"THE DELEGATES WERE TO BE ESCORTED TO THEMYSCIRA BY HERMES, THE GREEK GOD OF MESSENGERS.

"... HOME OF PROFESSOR JULIA KAPATELIS, AND THEN TO THE FRAMINGHAM APARTMENT OF COLONEL STEVE TREVOR--"

PLEASE--
PROFESSOR, WHERE IS HERMES?
WHERE IS WONDER WOMAN?
WHO IS THE TWELFTH DELEGATE?
WILL YOU BE RETURNING TO THEMYSCIRA?
WHAT?
WHO?
WHERE?
WHEN?
HOW?
WHY?
I DON'T---!!
--KNOW!!
NOW, YOU FELLOWS ARE JUST GOING TO HAVE TO BELIEVE ME. HERMES IS NOT HERE, HE WAS NEVER HERE, AND HE'S NOT GOING TO BE HERE. OKAY?
WHEN IS HERMES EXPECTED TO RETURN, COLONEL TREVOR?
ENOUGH ALREADY!
NO IT IS NOT ENOUGH, COLONEL TREVOR! I AM SUING YOU, LORD HERMES...
...WONDER WOMAN, AND THE U-NITED AIR FORCE FOR DAMAGES TO MY BUILDING! AND I WANT YOU O-U-T OUT!
WHADDUYA SAY TO THAT?!
I'M RETIRED FROM THE AIR FORCE.

THE GOD HERMES HAD NO NEED TO BE CONSCIOUS OF BLOOD.

HE NEVER NOTICED THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ARTERIAL, SO BRILLIANTLY RED, AND VENOUS, SO DARKLY BURGUNDY. NEVER NOTED THE WAY IT GUSHES FROM A CUT, ESCAPING THE SKIN BARRIER IN A SANGUINOUS FLOOD, CREEPING ALONG FABRIC BY CAPILLARY ACTION, STAINING EVERYTHING WITH ITS LIVING COLOR.

BUT THE MAN HERMES SEES EVERYTHING. HE SEES BLOOD TO BE THE WINE OF LIFE, AND THE RIPPLE OF DEATH.

WONDER WOMAN®

Created by

★ William Moulton Marston ★

"STRANGERS IN PARADISE"

GEORGE PÉREZ
PLOT

• MINDY NEWELL
SCRIPT

• CHRIS MARRINAN & STEVE MONTANO
ARTISTS

• AGUSTIN MAS
LETTERS

• CARL GAFFORD
COLORS

• MARK WAID
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

• KAREN BERGER
EDITOR

THERE IS A GRAND AND SAD MAJESTY TO THIS THING CALLED MORTALITY, DIANA. I NEVER KNEW THAT BEFORE.

PERHAPS AFTER ALL, MEN ARE THE TRUE OLYMPIANS, AND THE GODS BUT IMAGES GLANCED SIDEWAYS IN A MIRROR.

MY LORD--

YES. YOUR DELEGATES.

THAT'S NOT--

I DO NOT HAVE THE POWER TO CROSS CHAOS WITH THEM IN TOW, PRINCESS.

HOWEVER--

BUT--

I CAN ENHANCE THE WINGED SANDALS I GAVE YOU WITH A SECOND GIFT, TO ENABLE YOU TO BRING THEM TO THEMYSCIRA YOURSELF.

NO LONGER AM I *HERMES PSYCHOPOMPUS*, CONDUCTOR OF SOULS...

... FOR I CHARGE *THEE*, PRINCESS DIANA OF THEMYSCIRA, DAUGHTER OF HUMAN DESTINY, WITH MY LOVE AND SANCTION...

...TO GUIDE THOSE FRAIL SPIRITS WHOSE HEARTS AND EGOS ARE ABLAZE WITH PASSION ACROSS THE ABYSS INTO THE FUTURE.

LORD HERMES, I CANNOT ACCEPT THIS. IT'S BLASPHEMOUS!

I AM NO DEMI-GODDESS. NO OLYMPIAN BLOOD RUNS IN MY VEINS AS IT DOES IN LORD HERACLES'. I AM JUST A *WOMAN*, MY LORD--

A DAUGHTER OF MY MOTHER, NOT OF DESTINY. AS FRAIL AS *ANY* SOUL YOU WOULD HAVE ME LEAD ACROSS CHAOS.

YOU KNOW IT IS NOT BLASPHEMY TO ACCEPT A GOD'S GIFT, DIANA. OR TO GUARD HIS SYMBOL OF POWER...A POWER THAT IS LESSENING WITH EACH PASSING DAY.

I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THE FINAL JUDGMENT OF THE FATES WILL BE, BUT IT SEEMS THERE IS A PRICE TO PAY FOR INVOLVEMENT IN THE AFFAIRS OF HUMANITY.

AND YOU HAVE PAID IT WITH VALOR AND GRACE.

NOT REALLY, DIANA. THOUGH I AM TRYING.

MY JOURNEY THROUGH PATRIARCH'S WORLD HAS BEEN AS WINDING AND AS ROCKY AS THE ANCIENT ROAD FROM ATHENS TO DELPHI.

A TRUE TEST FOR HIM WHO WAS ONCE THE GOD OF TRAVELLERS.

NOW FARE THEE WELL, PRINCESS. I MUST RETURN TO FRAMINGHAM AND STEPHEN TREVOR.

I LEFT THE HOUSE IN A BIT OF A MESS.

YES. I KNOW.

METROPOLIS ON A SUMMER SUNDAY AFTERNOON. ALL THE CLEVER PEOPLE HAVE FLOWN TO THE SEASHORE FOR THE WEEKEND.

THEY MISS THE CITY LEFT BEHIND.

A SMOLDERING CITY, WHOSE STREETS SIZZLE TO A SULTRY BEAT. WHERE SHIMMERING MIRAGES RISE IN TROPICAL HEAT WAVES FROM BURNING ASPHALT--

WHERE GIRLS IN THEIR SUMMER DRESSES SMILE AT THE MEN STANDING ON THE CORNERS...

...OF THE CROSSROADS OF THE WORLD...

...WATCHING ALL THE GIRLS GO BY.

DAILY PI

AND FOR SOME, THE STEAMING HEAT BOILS DOWN MEMORIES OF WHAT REALLY WAS...

...INTO THE PASSIONS OF WHAT MIGHT BE.

SUPERMAN!

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME. YOU LOOK GREAT!

KISS'ER!

ATTAWAY, SUPES!

HI, STRANGER.

I WAS JUST COMING TO SEE YOU.

YOU TOO.

FF

UH-OH.

WHAT IS IT?

HOW ABOUT WE FLY SOMEPLACE A BIT MORE PRIVATE.

YOU LOOK UNCOMFORTABLE, AND I NEED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT SOMETHING.

I'M SORRY, DIANA. I DIDN'T MEAN TO PUT US ON DISPLAY LIKE THAT. ESPECIALLY SINCE I KNOW HOW THIS WORLD'S PROPENSITY FOR INNUENDO ANNOYS YOU.

THEMIS FINDS IT MOST OFFENSIVE.

THEMIS?

THE STEADFAST ONE. SHE IS THE GUARDIAN OF THE SOCIAL CONTACT BETWEEN ALL OF US. SHE REMINDS US TO TREAT ONE ANOTHER WITH COURTESY AND RESPECT.

WHEN YOU COME TO THEMYSCIRA AS *CLARK KENT*, YOU'LL LEARN MORE ABOUT THE GODDESSES AND THEIR TEACHINGS.

I CAN'T COME, DIANA. WHEN YOU LEAD A DOUBLE LIFE, YOU TEND TO HAVE *TRIPLE* THE COMMITMENTS.

DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT. THERE'S SOMEONE, A REPORTER, I WANT YOU TO ASK IN MY PLACE. IT'S *APROPOS*--

SHE'S JUST WON THE *WONDER WOMAN FOUNDATION AWARD*...

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS...

...LOIS LANE, OF THE METROPOLIS DAILY PLANET, IS THE WINNER IN THE "THEMYSCIRA SWEEPSTAKES." PULITZER PRIZE WINNER AND NOVELIST--

GET REAL, EILEEN!

I HAVEN'T BEEN IGNORING YOU, YOU'RE ONE OF MY BEST *FRIENDS*.

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO ACTED *WEIRD* THE OTHER DAY. NOT *ME*.

ANYWAY, I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE SO JEALOUS OF LUCY SPEARS. IT'S NOT LIKE SHE'S AN UPTIGHT SNOB LIKE JOANNE RIDINGS AND THAT BUNCH.

HERE, FRANKIE. AND USE YOUR FORK. LISTEN, NESSIE--

AND LUCY'S A REALLY GOOD INFLUENCE ON ME. SHE GUARANTEED PASSED ALL HER FINALS. BOY, MR. WESTLAKE BETTER HAVE PASSED ME.

I'LL *DIE* IF I FAILED GEOMETRY. OH, I DIDN'T *TELL* YOU, *DID* I? ME AND LUCY GOT ACCEPTED AS *CIT'S* AT *SLEEPAWAY* CAMP. ONLY, IF I DON'T PASS ALL MY FINALS, MY *MOTHER* SAYS I HAVE TO GO TO *TURKEY* WITH HER.

WHAT AM *I* SUPPOSED TO DO WHILE *SHE'S* MAKING *MUDPIES* WITH SOME OLD *DIRT*?!

YOU COULD STAY WITH ME ALL SUMMER. I'M SURE MY DAD WOULDN'T MIND.

STAY IN BOSTON?! DIRTY, SMELLY, BORING BOSTON?? UCHHH! THAT WOULD BE, LIKE, TOTALLY GROSS, EILEEN--

OH.

--ABSOLUTELY THE *PITS*!

HEY, PRINCESS DIANA'S ON THE *TV*.

YEAH, I SEE HER. MY MOTHER'S BEEN SO, LIKE, *DIFFERENT* EVER SINCE SHE GOT THAT LETTER FROM THE NATIONAL WHATCHAMACALLIT.

ALL SHE TALKS ABOUT IS *TURKEY*. *TURKEY* THIS AND *TURKEY* THAT. IT IS *SO* BORING.

WE EVEN HAD *TURKEY* FOR *DINNER* THE OTHER NIGHT. LIKE SHE THINKS IT'S THANKSGIVING OR SOMETHING.

EXCUSE ME, VANESSA, BUT THIS JUST CAME FOR YOU. FROM MR. WESTLAKE.

YIPPEEEEEE!

NEW YORK, NEW YORK--

DAG HAMMARSKJOLD PLAZA, THE UNITED NATIONS, WHERE THE WORLD GATHERS TO TALK. TO LISTEN. AND MAYBE--

--TO LEARN. I CAME FROM A WORLD HIDDEN IN THE MIST OF CENTURIES, KNOWN TO YOU ONLY BY THE SONGS OF HOMER, AND BY THE PHILOSOPHIES OF ANCIENT MEN.

I WAS A STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND, SHY AND SLOW OF SPEECH. A CHILD, STUMBLING AND BRUISING HER KNEES...

"SOME HAVE CALLED ME A FEMINIST. SOME HAVE CALLED ME A CHAUVINIST. OTHERS HAVE NAMED ME THEIR MESSIAH, AND A FEW HAVE NAMED ME A GODDESS.

"I AM NONE OF THESE. I REJECT ALL THOSE TITLES AND ATTRIBUTES--

...AND WHEN I FELL, IT WAS YOU WHO PICKED ME UP, AND TENDED MY WOUNDS, AND DRIED MY TEARS. WE LEARNED TO LAUGH TOGETHER...

...AND TOGETHER WE DISCOVERED OUR DIFFERENCES ONLY MADE FOR A GREATER WHOLE.

--FOR WHAT I AM, WHAT MY AMAZON SISTERS ARE, WHAT WE ALL ARE, ARE HUMANISTS. BELIEVING IN THE VERY REAL POSSIBILITIES THAT BEING HUMAN AFFORDS US...

...NO MATTER WHAT OUR INDIVIDUAL HANDICAPS, OR OUR INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS."

HELLENIC TRADITION HOLDS THAT THERE HAVE BEEN FOUR GREAT AGES OF HUMANITY. THE FIRST WAS THE *GOLDEN AGE*...

...A TIME OF COMPLETE HAPPINESS. ALL THE BLESSINGS OF THE WORLD WERE THEIRS. THE FRUITFUL EARTH GAVE FORTH ITS TREASURES UNBIDDEN.

HEY, I JUST REALIZED--SHE'S SPEAKING *THEMYSCIRAN*, ISN'T SHE? AND EVERYBODY'S UNDERSTANDING HER. *WITHOUT* INTERPRETERS.

THE SECOND, THE SILVER AGE--

REMARKABLE.

--ROBUST, DELIGHTING ONLY IN OATHS AND WARLIKE EXPLOITS. THIS WAS THE *BRONZE AGE*...

FINAL CALL FOR OLYMPIC AIRWAYS FLIGHT 216

...WHEN HUMAN HEARTS WERE PITILESS AND HARD AS STEEL. WHEN THEIR MIGHT WAS UNTAMEABLE, AND THEIR ARMS INVINCIBLE--

JULIA, THAT'S YOU.

--THE *IRON AGE*, CONTEMPORARY TIMES, A PERIOD OF MISERY AND CRIME, WITH NO RESPECT FOR VIRTUE, JUSTICE, OR VOWS.

A LITTLE HEAVY, DIANA. BE CAREFUL. YOU DON'T WANT TO TIP THE SCALES.

JULIA! YOUR FLIGHT!

HMM? RIGHT, I'M READY. LET'S GO.

VANESSA, YOU BE GOOD, PROMISE, AND LISTEN TO GLORIA, AND DON'T ACT UP AT THAT SUMMER CAMP, AND IF I DON'T HEAR FROM YOU AT LEAST TWICE A WEEK, THAT MEANS LETTERS, I'M NOT GOING TO BE NEAR A PHONE, GLORIA, YOU HAVE THAT EMERGENCY NUMBER DON'T YOU, DON'T LOSE IT, AND VANESSA, REMEMBER, ANY PROBLEMS, ANYTHING AT ALL, YOU LET GLORIA KNOW, GLORIA, I REALLY APPRECIATE ALL THIS--

NOW IS THE DAWN OF A NEW AGE...

...HERALDED BY THE SEERS OF *ALL* AGES AS A TIME OF REBIRTH FOR HUMANITY AND DEITIES, WHEN WE WILL ALL KNOW THAT WE ARE OF *ONE* FAMILY...

...AND THAT WE *ALL* OWE THE BREATH OF LIFE TO THE SAME MOTHER.

LADY HESTIA, LORD HERMES, LEND ME YOUR FAVORS... HELP ME--

NOW, HONORED DELEGATES, ALLOW MY LASSO, FORGED FROM GAEA'S GIRDLE BY HESTIA'S FIRES, TO BIND YOU TOGETHER IN *BODY* AS WELL AS IN *SPIRIT*--

--LET AESCULAPIUS *HEAL* YOUR MINDS AND HEARTS. OPEN THEM TO THE SERPENT-CADUCEUS, LET IT *CLEANSE* YOU FOR YOUR JOURNEY INTO PARADISE.

FEEL THE POWER. *FEEL* THE GLORY. LET IT *SURROUND* YOU. *CHERISH* YOU. *NOURISH* YOU.

EMBRACE IT. *WELCOME* IT. AND LET IT...

...CARRY YOU AWAY.

THEY'RE *GONE*!!

HOLY TOLEDO!

PARADISE ISLAND--

THE FOREST OF DRYOPE, ON THE SHORE OF AMPHITRITE'S SEA...

<THE PRINCESS IS LATE.>*

<WE ARE EARLY, HELLENE.>

<PERHAPS THESE SO-CALLED HONORABLE DELEGATES HAVE CHANGED THEIR MINDS. PERHAPS THE PRINCESS IS TOO ASHAMED-->

*TRANSLATED FROM THEMYSCIRAN--K.B.

<SILENCE!>

<THE VOTE WAS TAKEN, THE MAJORITY WILLED FOR THIS DAY...>

<...AND IF ANY OTHER HERE HAS OBJECTIONS, JOIN HELLENE AND LEAVE THIS FOREST. GO BACK TO THE CITY, STAY BITTER, BUT STAY AWAY FROM THE AGORA...>

<...FOR I WILL NOT HAVE YOU SHAMING ME, DIANA, OR YOURSELVES BEFORE OUR GUESTS.>

<PEACE, HIPPOLYTE. HELLENE IS NERVOUS, AS WE ALL ARE, BUT NO ONE HAS ANY INTENTION OF ACTING IN ANY MANNER EXCEPT AS BEFITTING AN AMAZON.>

<YES...YES, I KNOW. I, TOO, AM AS TENSE AS THE BOWSTRING OF ARTEMIS. I'M SORRY FOR YELLING, PYTHIA.>

<PHILLIPUS, WHERE IS MENALIPPE? WITH PENELOPE ON THE ISLE OF HEALING?>

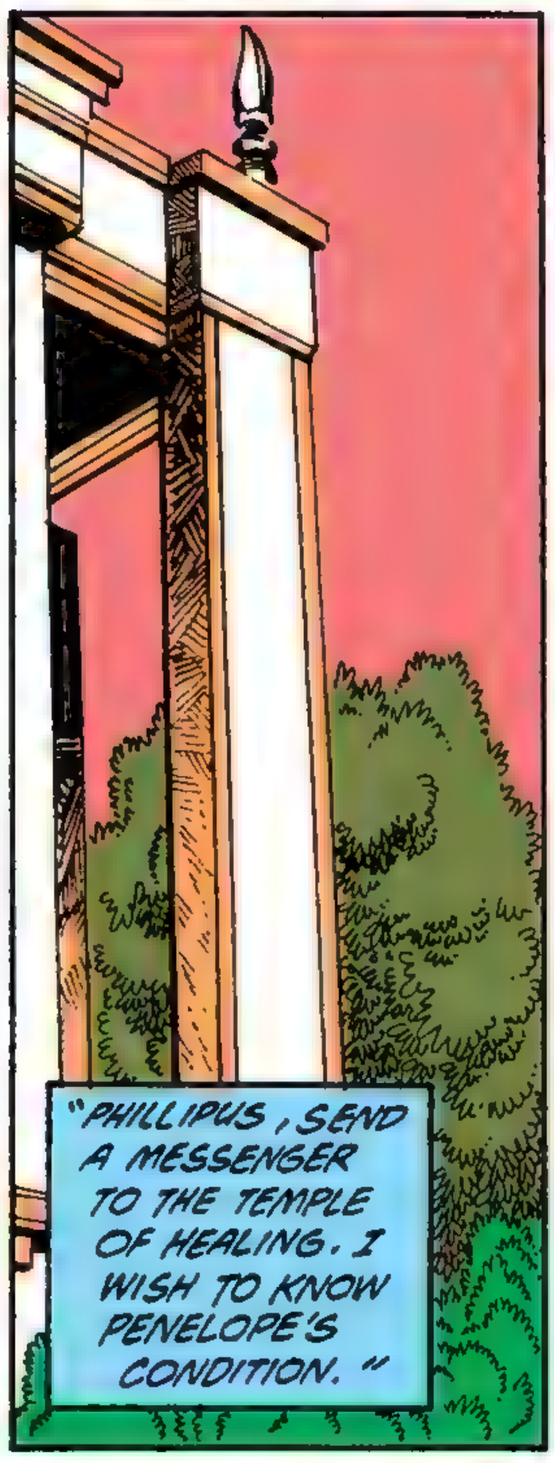
<NO, MY LADY...>

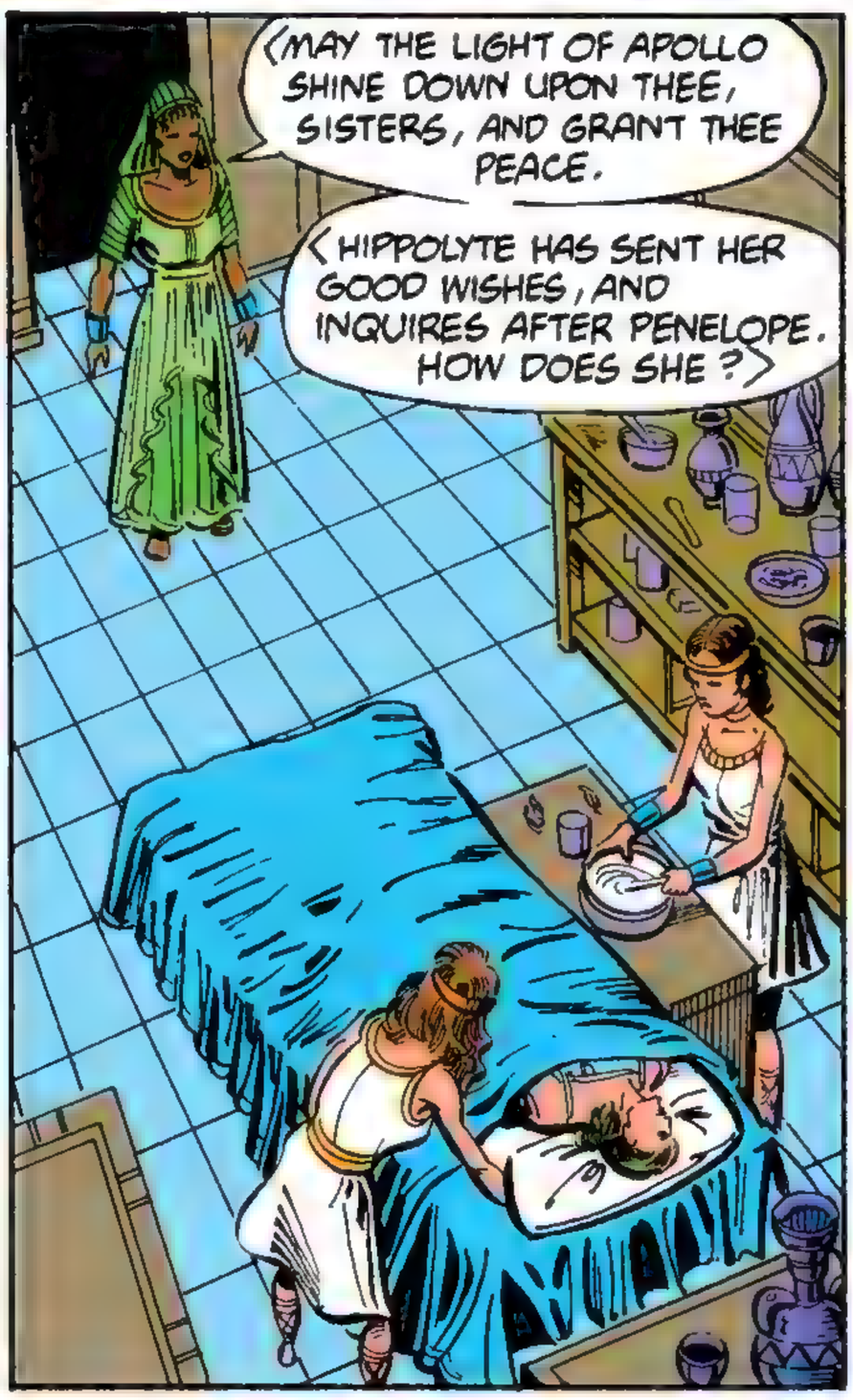
<"...SHE HAS STAYED IN THEMYSCIRA TO ASSIST WITH THE FINAL PREPARATIONS FOR THE BANQUET.">

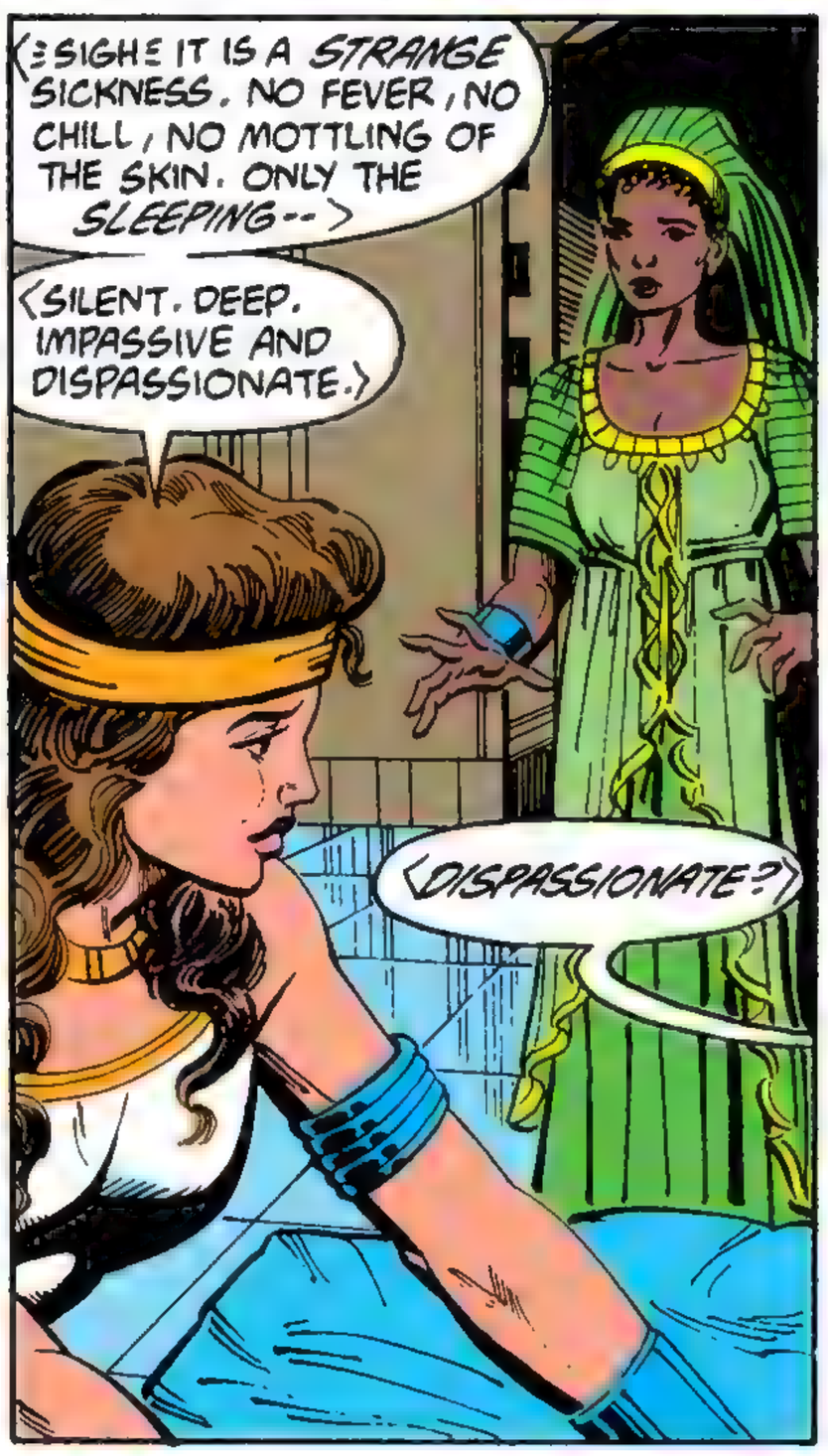
<CARRY THE APPLES MOST CAREFULLY. I WOULD NOT HAVE THEIR GOLDEN PERFECTION BRUISED-->

<AND SPREAD THEM EVENLY ALONG THE DAIS. I DO NOT WANT THE STRANGERS TO CLAIM THAT AMAZONS ARE PENURIOUS WITH THEIR BLESSED BOUNTY.>

"REALLY. HOW STRANGE.
"MENALIPPE AND PENELOPE ARE DEVOTED TO EACH OTHER. WHY ISN'T SHE AT PENELOPE'S SIDE, OR LIGHTING INCENSE IN HER BEHALF TO ATHENA?"
"I DON'T KNOW, MY LADY."

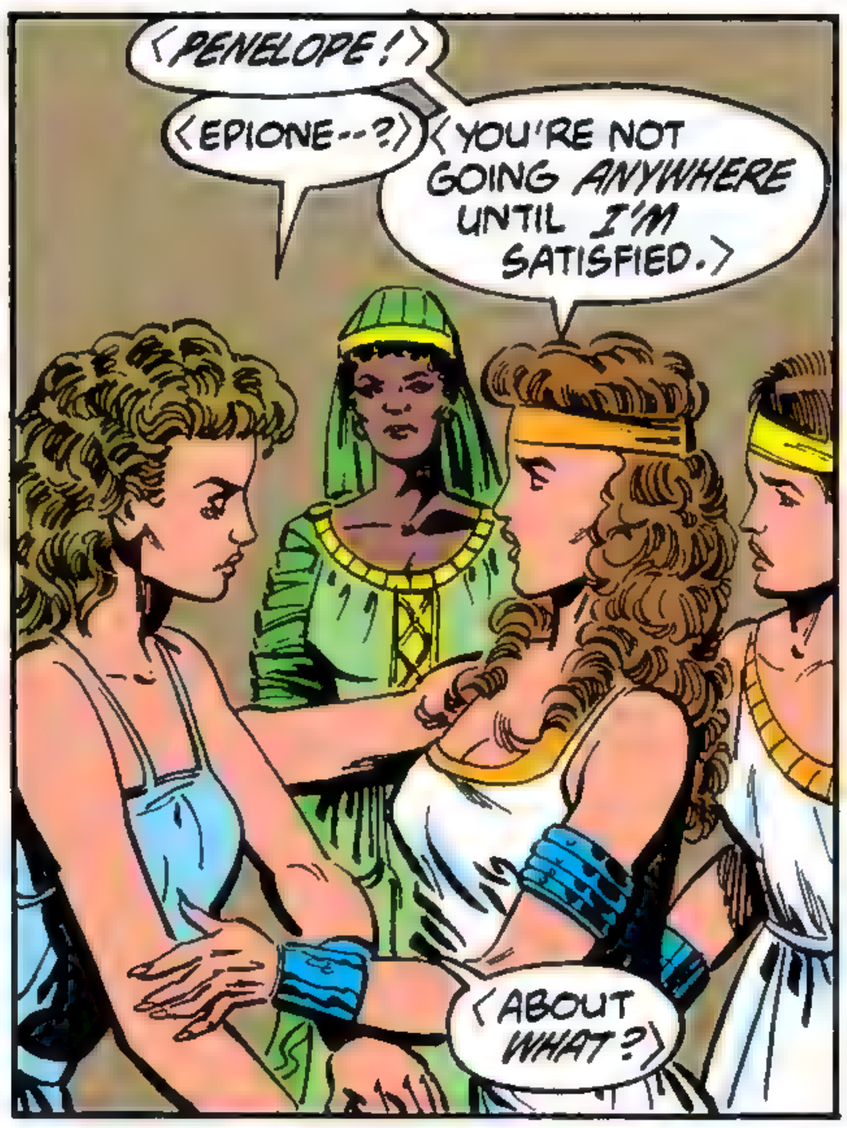

"PHILLIPUS, SEND A MESSENGER TO THE TEMPLE OF HEALING. I WISH TO KNOW PENELOPE'S CONDITION."


"MAY THE LIGHT OF APOLLO SHINE DOWN UPON THEE, SISTERS, AND GRANT THEE PEACE.
"HIPPOLYTE HAS SENT HER GOOD WISHES, AND INQUIRES AFTER PENELOPE. HOW DOES SHE?"

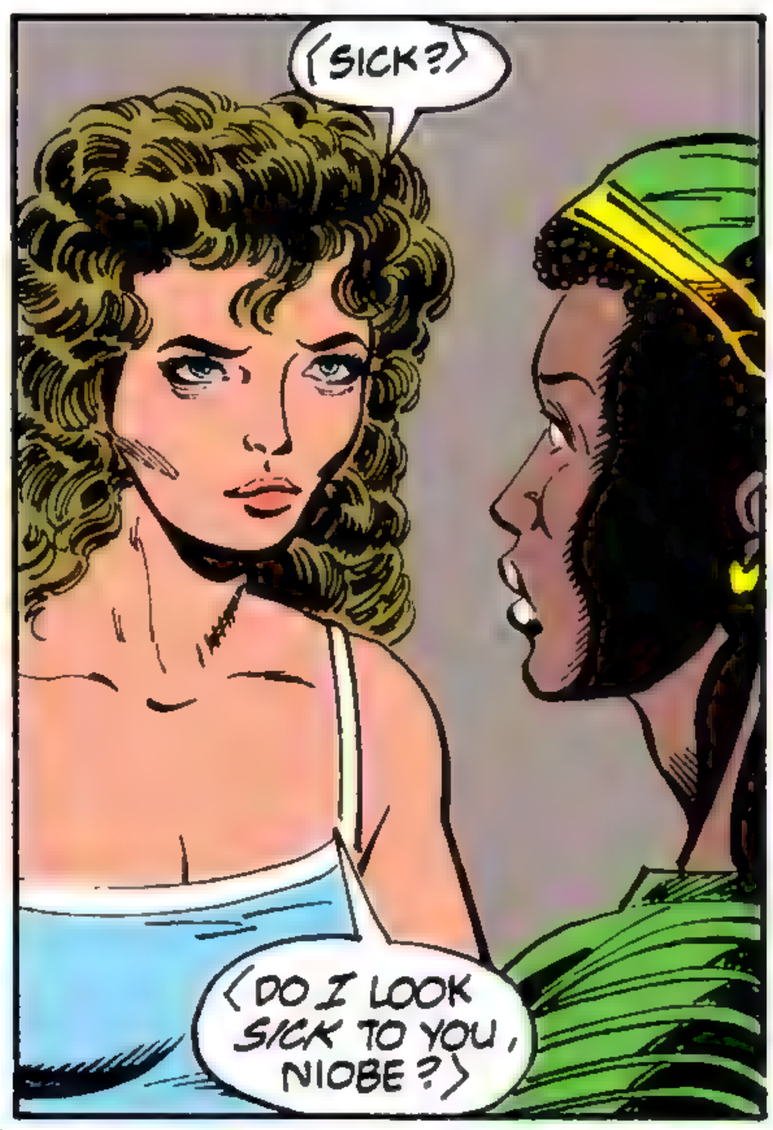

"SIGH IT IS A STRANGE SICKNESS. NO FEVER, NO CHILL, NO MOTTLING OF THE SKIN. ONLY THE SLEEPING--"
"SILENT. DEEP. IMPASSIVE AND DISPASSIONATE."
"DISPASSIONATE?"

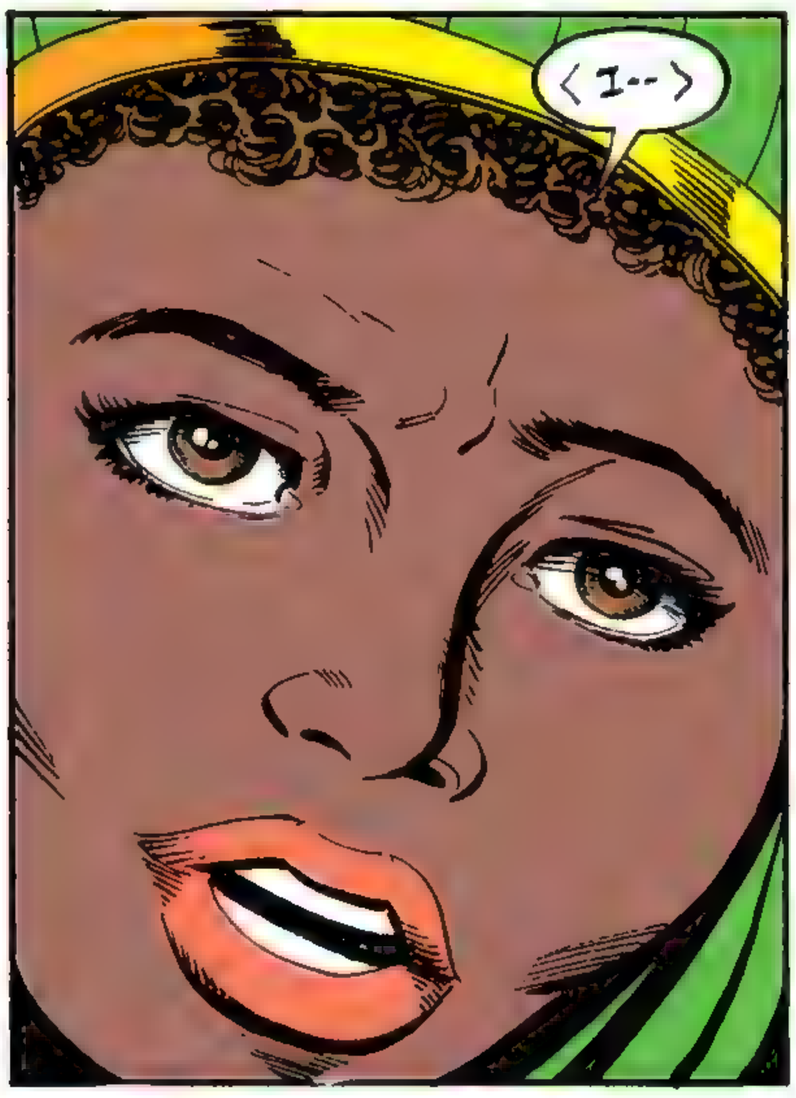
"I HAVE BEEN CALLED MANY THINGS, EPIONE, BUT NEVER DISPASSIONATE."
"WHAT AM I DOING HERE? WHERE IS MENALIPPE?"
"THEMYSCIRA... THE FEAST OF FIVE..."
"AND YOU WERE LETTING ME SLEEP?"

"PENELOPE. WAIT."
"WAIT? WE ARE PRIESTESSES, EPIONE. THEY CAN'T START WITHOUT US. COME. HURRY."
"I GUESS SHE SLEPT IT OFF."
"WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? SLEPT WHAT OFF? WHERE'S MENALIPPE? LET'S GO."

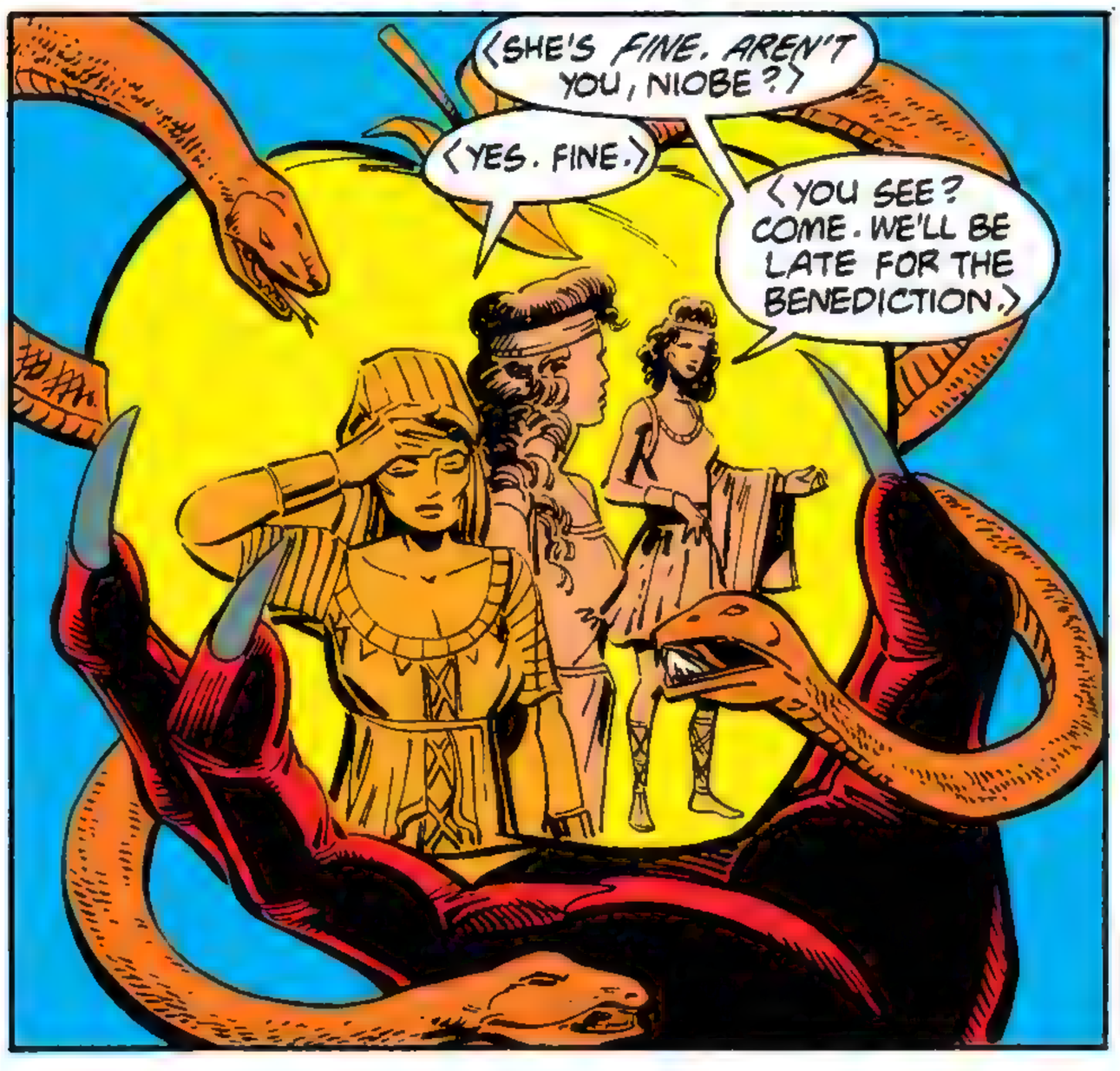

〈PENELOPE!〉
〈EPIONE--?〉
〈YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE UNTIL I'M SATISFIED.〉
〈ABOUT WHAT?〉

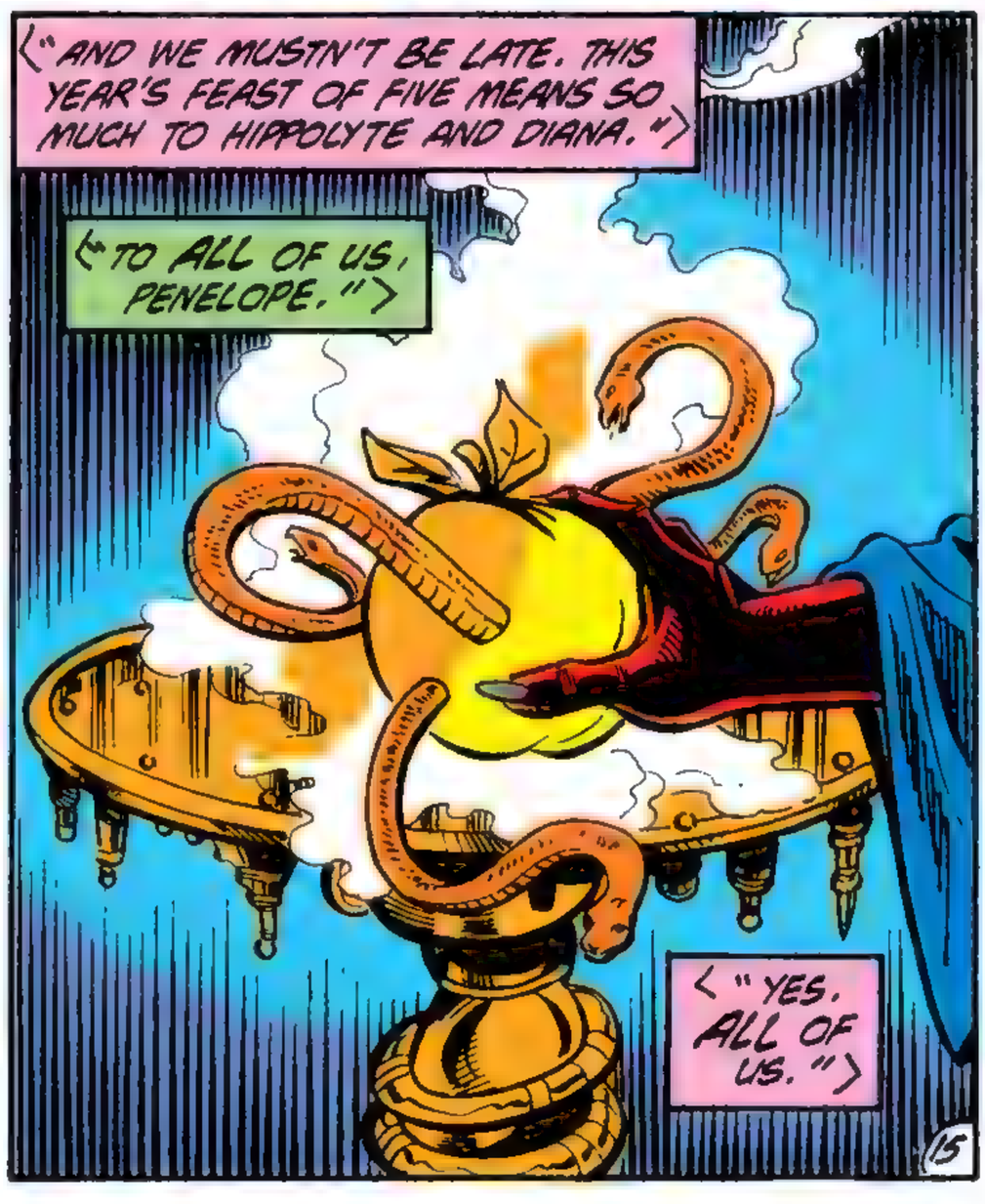
〈YOU'RE SICK, PENELOPE.〉


〈SICK?〉
〈DO I LOOK SICK TO YOU, NIOBE?〉


〈I--〉

〈SICK? WHO? I MEAN.〉
〈ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, NIOBE?〉


〈SHE'S FINE. AREN'T YOU, NIOBE?〉
〈YES. FINE.〉
〈YOU SEE? COME. WE'LL BE LATE FOR THE BENEDICTION.〉


〈"AND WE MUSTN'T BE LATE. THIS YEAR'S FEAST OF FIVE MEANS SO MUCH TO HIPPOLYTE AND DIANA."〉
〈"TO ALL OF US, PENELOPE."〉
〈"YES. ALL OF US."〉

THE FOREST OF DRYOPE...

LOOK!

AND THE AMAZONS WONDER...

...IS THIS LORD HELIOS, THE SUN? HE, WHO IN HIS GOLDEN CHARIOT SHEDS LIGHT ON GODS AND HUMAN KIND ALIKE, PLUMBING ALL HEARTS--

FOR HE IS THE INFALLIBLE ONE--

WHOM NEITHER MORTAL NOR IMMORTAL CAN DECEIVE IN THEIR ACTIONS, OR IN THEIR MOST SECRET THOUGHTS.

AND THE AMAZONS ALL SHARE ONE MOST SECRET THOUGHT.

EVEN THEIR QUEEN, HIPPOLYTE, WHOSE DAUGHTER IS NOW REVEALED AS THE CHARIOTEER OF HELIOS, HARBORS A HIDDEN QUESTION--

DIANA HAS FOLLOWED THEIR PATRON ARTEMIS IN SO MANY WAYS-- VIRGIN, HUNTER, WARRIOR, LIGHT-BEARER.

HAS SHE NOW ASSUMED THE DARKER ATTRIBUTES OF THE GOD-MOTHER? IS SHE NOW DIANA IOCHEAIRA, WHOSE ARROWS STRIKE DOWN WOMEN IN SUDDEN DEATH?

UNLIKELY. FOR SHE SERVES THIS DAY NOT AS THE BRINGER OF PAIN AND DESTRUCTION...

...BUT AS THE HARBINGER OF PEACE--AND FELLOWSHIP.

PARADISE FOUND

SMELL THE WATER. AND THE TREES.

By Lois Lane

WHAT DO YOU THINK WE PASSED THROUGH, RABBI?

I'M NOT SURE. GOD'S WAITING ROOM?

Special to the Metropolis Daily Planet

Led by a Beatrice never envisioned by Dante, twelve delegates (apostles?) passed through Hell and Purgatory today to set foot on Heaven's shores.

Standing guard at the pearly gates was a band of angels, dressed as extras for a Cecil B. DeMille film about the Trojan War. Only this was not Hollywood. This was Paradise Island...

WELCOME.

WE SAY HERE, "START WITH HESTIA", FOR HESTIA IS THE HEARTH, AND THE HEARTH IS THE FIRE AROUND WHICH MEN AND WOMEN HAVE GATHERED THROUGH THE AGES...

...TO FIND COMFORT FROM THE NIGHT, SOLACE FOR THEIR PAIN, AND UNDER-STANDING OF THEIR MUTUAL LONELINESS.

SO LET US START WITH HESTIA, AND HAIL THE GLORY THAT WILL FOLLOW!

...and these were the Amazons.

HAIL, HESTIA!

HAIL THE GLORY!

HIPPODAMIA, WE ARE READY!

YOU WILL LET US KNOW IF THERE IS PAIN?

I'M QUITE WELL. REALLY.

The Amazons, a race of perfect humanity secluded from an imperfect world for 3000 years, were fascinated by the physical liabilities of Mr. Tibet and young Rovo Quashi.

Mr. Tibet, in particular, appeared to appreciate all the attention of these pre-Hellenic beauties.

IT IS THE EQUIVALENT OF TEN KILOMETERS TO THE CAPITAL--

DOES ANYONE *ELSE* CARE TO GO BY CHARIOT, OR PERHAPS HORSEBACK? PLEASE SPEAK UP. DON'T BE SHY. WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER.

Beneath eucalyptus trees millennia-old, an extraordinary posse rode into town--the Amazons, superb horsewomen, easy and relaxed in the saddle...

...and the visitors, for the most part stiff and nervous in their Grecian stirrups.

TIRED?

A LITTLE.

WE'RE *ALL* SHOWING A LITTLE WEAR-AND-TEAR.

THERE'S A REST STATION UP AHEAD. WE'LL WASH THE MUD FROM BETWEEN OUR TOES AND CHANGE INTO FRESH CLOTHING BEFORE WE ENTER THE CITY.

Themyscira. The Troy of Priam. The Athens of Pericles. The Rome of Julius Caesar. A city of the ages and for the ages, built of marble and sandstone, acropolis and agora--alive, thriving, stirring, and spectacular.

I WONDER IF THESE AMAZONS KNOW OF *THEOPHRASTUS*.

WHO?

A PUPIL OF ARISTOTLE, AND THE FATHER OF BOTANY. HIS "INQUIRY INTO PLANTS" WAS THE FIRST ATTEMPT TO CLASSIFY TYPES OF FLORA.

THESE FLOWERS! I *MUST* SPEAK TO THEIR BOTANISTS!

I'D LIKE A CHAT WITH THEIR *ARCHITECTS*.

YOU KNOW, ORTHODOX JUDAISM *FORBIDS* GRAVEN IMAGES.

YES. THOU SHALT NOT PUT OTHER GODS BEFORE ME. DO YOU *REALLY* THINK SUCH WORKS OF ART AND FAITH ARE BLASPHEMOUS, RABBI?

I'M NOT ORTHODOX, REVEREND.

THE STUDY OF HISTORY IS USEFUL TO THE HISTORIAN BY TEACHING HIM HIS IGNORANCE OF WOMEN. THE WOMAN WHO IS KNOWN ONLY THROUGH A MAN IS KNOWN WRONG.

YOU ARE A WISE MAN, MR. CANTWELL.

ME? I'M ONLY A TEACHER, MNEMOSYNE. THE MAN WHO SAID THAT WAS THE *TRUE* HISTORIAN. HENRY BROOKS ADAMS--

AND TO THINK, YOU WERE ALIVE AND WELL AND JUST AS YOU ARE NOW WHEN HE SAID THAT. 82 *YEARS* AGO. I WASN'T EVEN *BORN* YET.

CLIK WHIRRRR

CLIK WHIRRRR

CLIK WHIRRRR

CLIK WHIRRRR

CLIK WHIRRRR

SISTERS AND HONORED DELEGATES--!

OUR PREPATRIARCHAL TRADITIONS ARE A RICH SOURCE FROM WHICH WOMEN *AND* MEN MAY DRAW. THEY SPEAK OF HARMONIOUS BONDS AMONG HUMANS, ANIMALS, AND NATURE--

--THEY RESPECT AND CELEBRATE THE MYSTERIES OF BODY AND SPIRIT--

ALL OF US WHO HAVE SHARED THE BOND OF A WOMAN'S WOMB ARE *ONE* FAMILY. WE ARE *INDIVISIBLE*--

THEMYSCIRA HAS *PROSPERED* IN HER LONG INFANCY...

...BUT THE *CONTRACT OF THEMIS* IS OVER. THE *NEW* ORDER WILL BE DIFFERENT. CHILDREN NAMED AFTER FATHERS, CITIES FORTIFIED FOR WAR, POWER WORSHIPPED ABOVE ALL.

YES. AND *YOU*, PENELOPE--?

HAVE YOU *TRULY* RECOVERED?

RECOVERED IS NOT A STRONG ENOUGH WORD, SISTER. I FEEL RENEWED. RESTORED. A TOXIN HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM MY BLOOD...

...AND MY EYES ARE NO LONGER BLURRED WITH FEVER.

WHAT DO YOU SEE, PENELOPE?

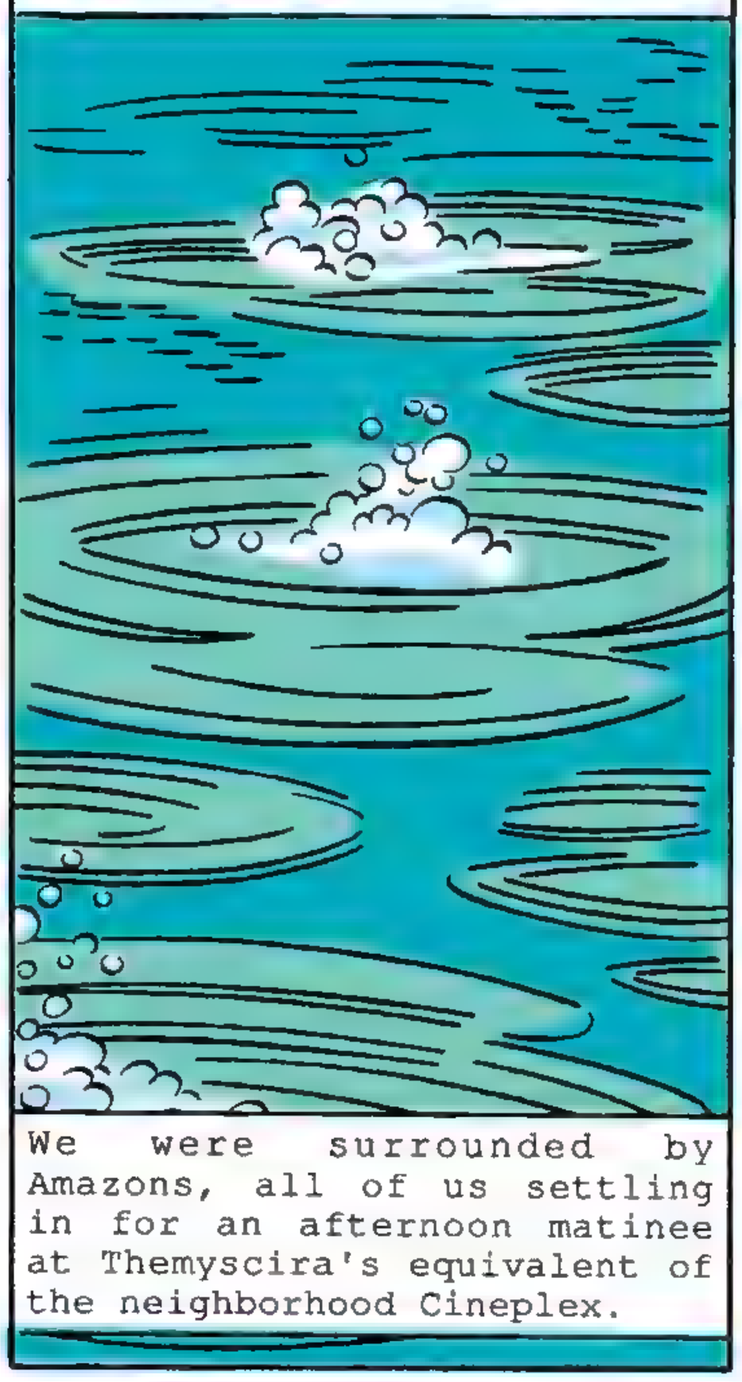
EXACTLY WHAT HIPPOLYTE AND DIANA *WANT* US TO SEE, MENALIPPE--

"THE *START* OF A *NEW ERA*--

"THE *DAWN* OF A NEW *AGE*."

TO BE CONTINUED...

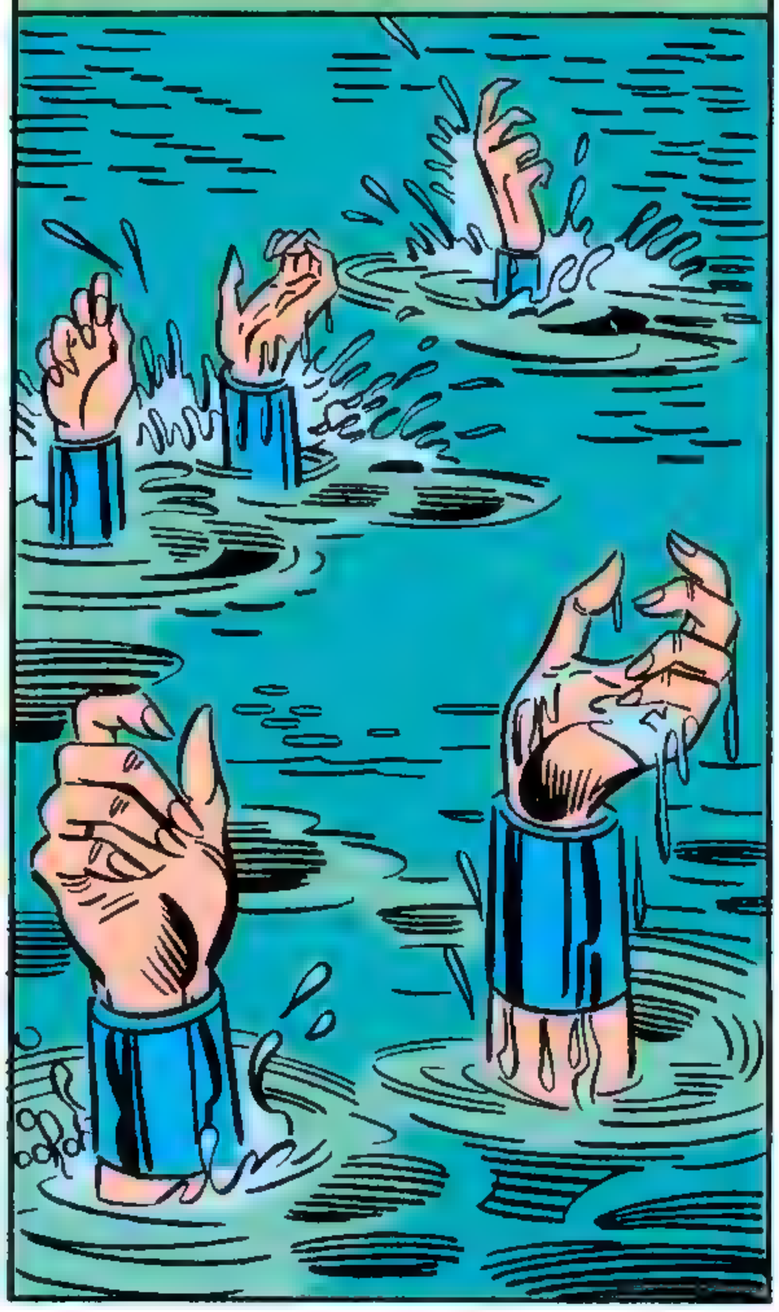
The echoing amphitheatre was quiet. To my left sat Phyllis Haller, American feminist author and hellraiser. On my right was Robert Cantwell, British history teacher and former POW bridge builder.



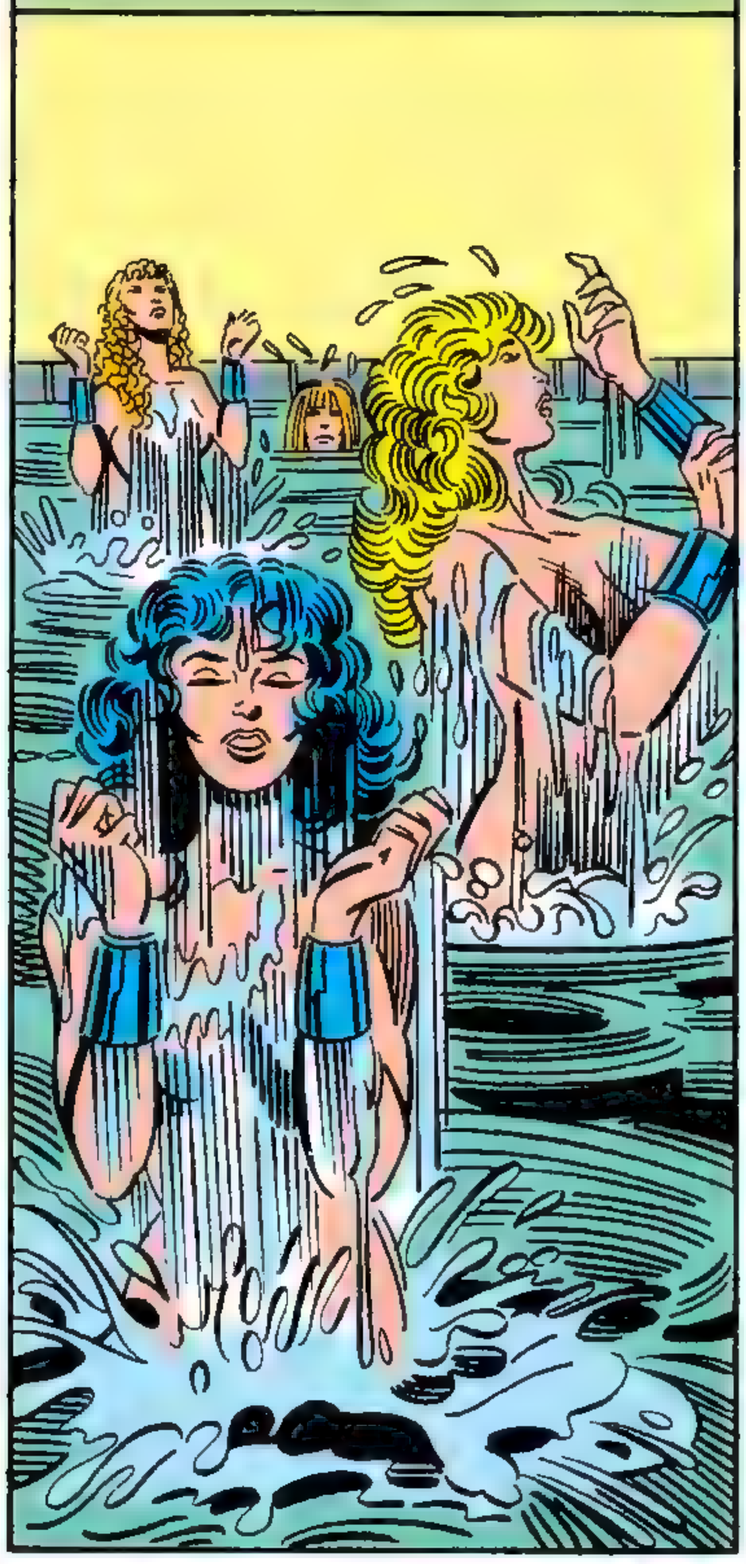
We were surrounded by Amazons, all of us settling in for an afternoon matinee at Themyscira's equivalent of the neighborhood Cineplex.

"AND THE CAVERN OF SOULS HELD WITHIN ITS WOMB THE SECRET SOULS OF WOMANKIND WAILING IN LIMBO.

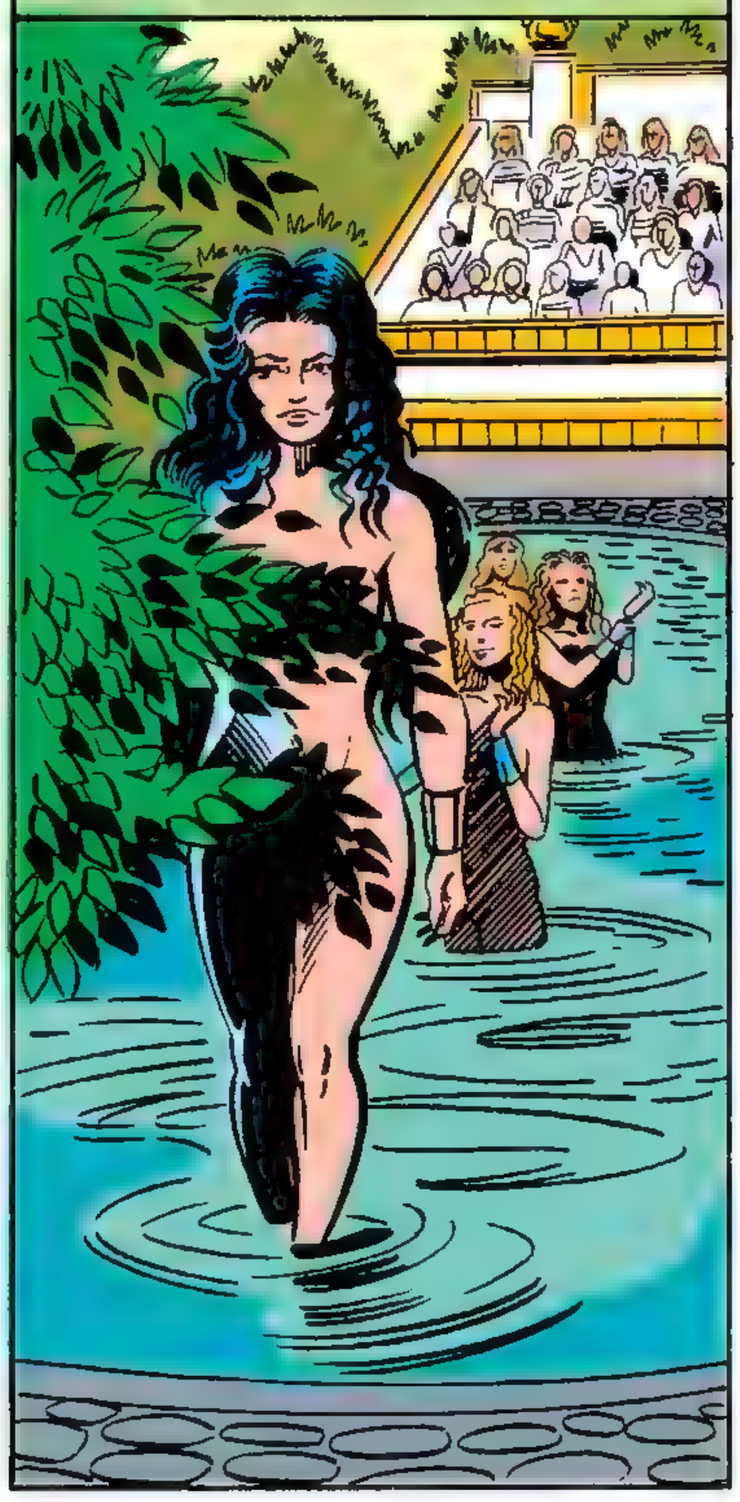
"THEIR CRIES PAINED GAEA, AND SHE CALLED HER DAUGHTERS ATHENA, ARTEMIS, DEMETER, HESTIA, AND FAIR APHRODITE TO COMFORT AND MIDWIVE THEIR MOTHER IN HER LABOUR.



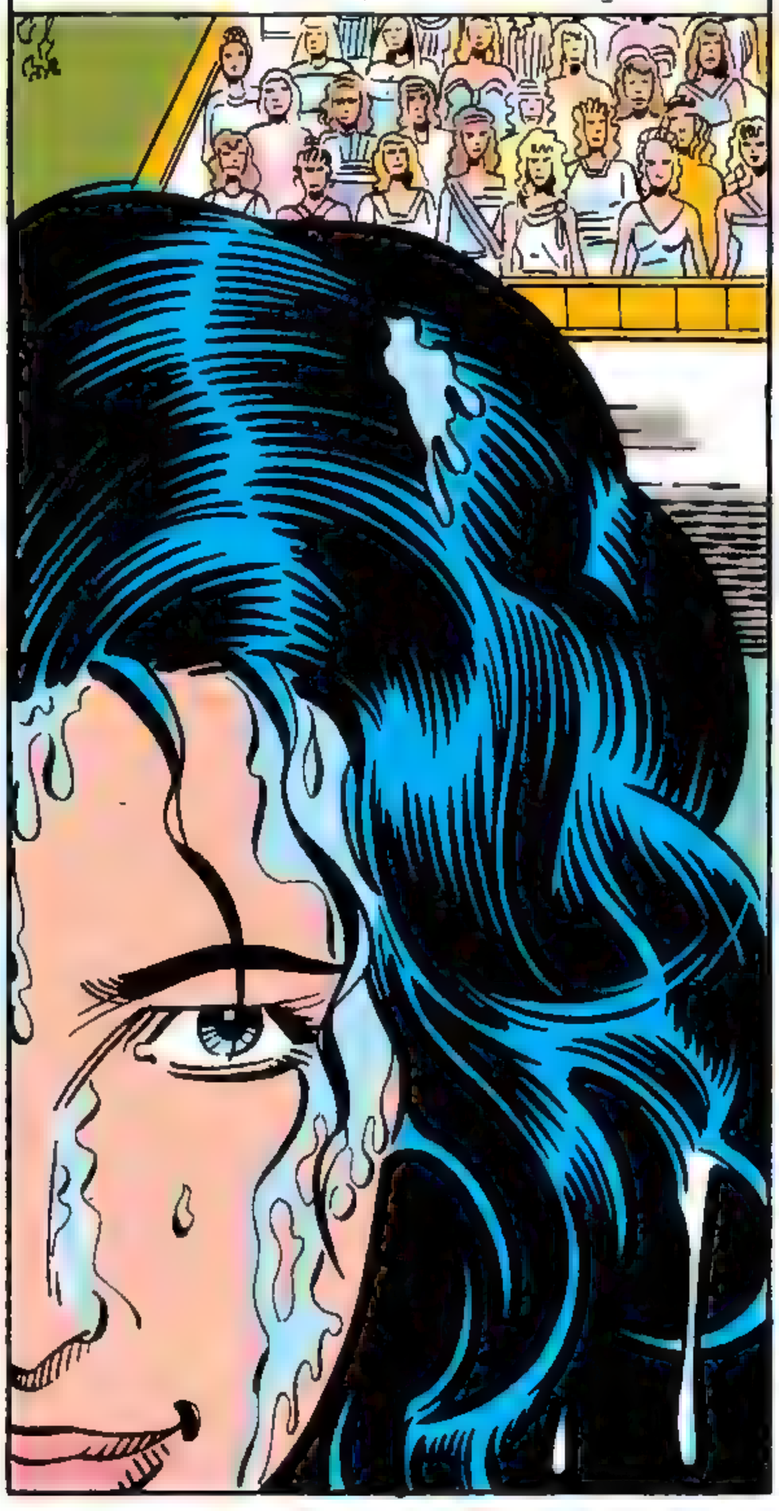
"THE SAC OF WATER, OF LIFE, BROKE AND SPILLED ITS SEED UPON THE EARTH, FOSTERING FAIR FLOWERS.



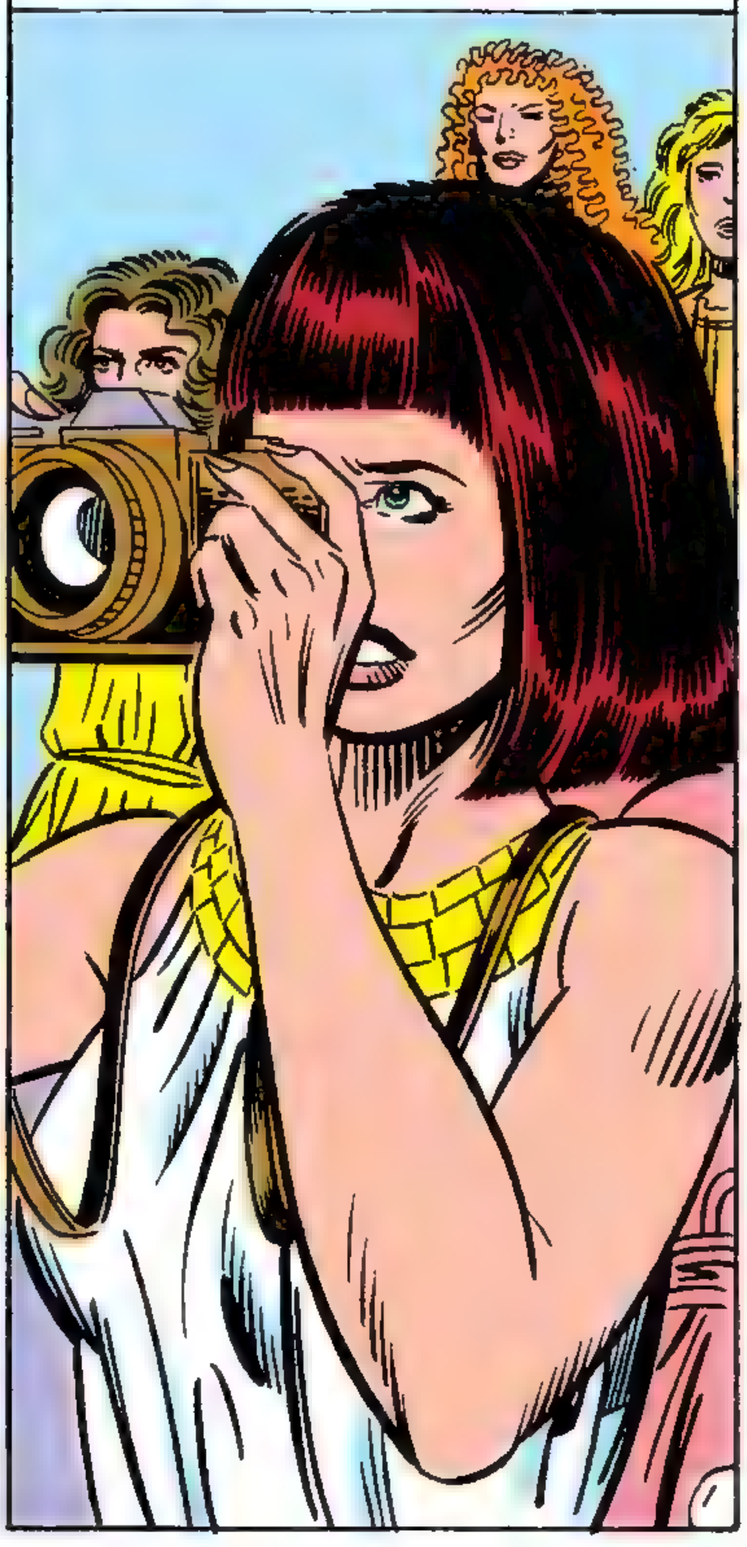
"THOUSANDS SPRUNG UP, AND THE FIRST WAS HIPPOLYTE, PALE-BROWED AND BLACK-HAIRED. BEAUTEOUS ANTIOPE NEXT, AND THEN MENALIPPE THE BLESSED ORACLE."



As part of the festivities, and in honor of the delegates, Queen Hippolyte had arranged a command performance of her Queen's Players.



A passion play, complete with Greek chorus. A re-enactment of the birth of this proud and noble ancient race.



"ON THIS MORNING OF A NEW MOON WE BATHED TOGETHER IN THE FREEING WATER.

"WE GATHERED BRANCHES OF OLIVE AND ROSEMARY AND LAID THEM OUT INTO A CIRCLE, THUS THE NEVER-ENDING CYCLE.

"OF LIFE AND DEATH AND BLOOD AND CLEANSING TWILIGHT CAME AND WE LIT FIRES, AND PERFORMED, TO OUR GOD-MOTHERS, THE SACRED LITURGIES.

"AND THEY DREW FORTH FROM OUR BODIES THE BLOOD OF PURIFICATION, AND RENEWED OUR FERTILITY.

"HIPPOLYTE AND ANTIOPE OUR QUEENS WERE CHOSEN, AND TO THEM WERE GIVEN, TO WEAR IN GLORY, THE GIRDLES OF GAEA.

"FROM PALLAS ATHENA CAME THE IMPULSE OF THE ARTS, THE WARRIOR'S STRENGTH FOR DEFENSE, AND OUR TITLE, AMAZON"

"SHOULDER-TO-SHOULDER WE CLAIMED PARTNERSHIP WITH MEN. FROM THE LOINS OF BROTHERHOOD AND THE MONS OF SISTERHOOD PAIRED WOULD COME HUMANITY.

"THEN BY UNCOILED MUSCLES AND OILED STEEL WERE WE TAKEN.

"OVERCOME BY UNLEASHED LUST, DECEIVED, BRUTALIZED, RAPED."

"CHAINED HIPPOLYTE! SHAMED HIPPOLYTE! WEEP FOR YOUR AMAZONS, HIPPOLYTE! THEN SHED NO FURTHER TEAR.

"BUT LET GAEA RENEW YOUR SPIRIT. LET OLYMPUS REGRACE YOUR WOUNDED HEART. ONCE MORE THE RITUAL BLOOD, BUT DIFFERENT, SHED FOR PURIFICATION.

"THE CALL TO ARMS IS SOUNDED WITH A CAUTION TO ALLOW FOR GAEA'S WAY. BUT WE WERE LIKE THE EAGLE FEASTING ON THE LIVER OF PROMETHEUS,

"HADES, COLD AND PALE, THE FINAL KING, NOW RULED IN THEMYSCIRA. AND CAME TO THE TWO QUEENS HIS BENEFACTOR THE WAR-GOD ARES.

"HUNGERED, HUNGERING, HUNGRY FOR THE BLOOD OF MAN.

"SHE WHO WAS FIRST-BORN AND FIRST-FREED BY THE GODDESSES TURNED AWAY FROM THE CARNAGE-SEEKER. BUT ANTIOPE AND HER FOLLOWERS CHOSE TO FOLLOW-- WE BID FAREWELL.

"NOW BOUND TO OUR GODDESSES, NOW BOUND TO OUR BRACELETS OF SORROW AND REMEMBRANCE, WE FOLLOWED THE TRAIL TO THE AEGEAN SEA-- BOUND FOR PARADISE.

"WE CAME UPON THE SEASHORE. NO BOAT, NO RAFT, NO STICK OF WOOD TO BUILD A WORTHY SEACRAFT, BUT ONLY SAND AND FAITH.

"BUT SUCH FAITH AS TO CAUSE DEMETER TO WHISPER INTO A CONCH-SHELL SECRET WORDS TO A PAST LOVER. AND LORD POSEIDON ANSWERED.

"THE OCEAN PARTED AS HE LAY DOWN HIS BODY BEFORE US, A PATHWAY TO PARADISE. WE LEFT THE WORLD OF MEN BEHIND US AND TRESPASSED THE SEA-GOD."

THE DAYS BROUGHT FATIGUE THE NIGHTS BITTER COLD AT EVERY TURN WE FEARED THE WALL OF WATER WHICH SURROUNDED US WOULD FALTER AND THUNDER DOWN UPON US

YET IT HELD AND AS OUR FEET TOUCHED THE SOIL OF PARADISE ISLAND EACH AMAZON KNEW THE GIFT OF IMMORTALITY

OUR FAITH HAD PROVEN RIGHT AND WE SET OURSELVES HEART AND SOUL TO WORK

THE *WORDS* ARE RIGHT, BUT THE *MELODY'S* ALL WRONG. DRONING. ALMOST AS IF SHE WERE -!

BORED?

BUILDING CLEARING PLANNING

THUS DID THE CENTURIES PASS THUS DID WE REGAIN AND RENEW OUR PURPOSE AND DISCIPLINE

FOR A WOMAN WHO MAKES *PRONOUNCEMENTS* FOR A LIVING, MENALIPPE SURE IS A *LOUSY* PUBLIC SPEAKER.

EVEN THE *PRINCESS* LOOKS EMBARRASSED FOR HER.

"OR IS IT SOMETHING *ELSE*?"

CLAP CLAP CLAP

CLAP CLAP CLAP

Elsewhere on this lush and paradisiacal isle, other Amazons prepared for the formal commencement of the "Feast of Five,"...

...a holiday that combines elements of Christianity's Easter, Judaism's Passover, and the Islam month of Ramadan.

The most common element being a sit-down dinner where guests are expected to stuff themselves.

THE GOLDEN APPLES ARE JUST THE RIGHT *TOUCH*, PENELOPE. I CAN'T THANK YOU *ENOUGH* FOR BRINGING THEM TO MY ATTENTION.

THANK *MENALIPPE*, CLIO.

"IT WAS SHE WHO THOUGHT OF THEM..."

"...AS BEING THE PERFECT DESSERT."

WONDER WOMAN®

Created by
★ *William Moulton Marston* ★

FORBIDDEN FRUIT

GEORGE PEREZ — PLOT
MINDY NEWELL — SCRIPT
CHRIS MARRINAN — PENCILS
MIKE MACHLAN — INKS
CARL GAFFORD — COLORS
AGUSTIN MAS — LETTERS
MARK WAID — ASSOC. EDITOR
KAREN BERGER — EDITOR

To whet our appetites for this coming repast, we were treated to an afternoon of mingling, playing, and studying in this Grecian Never-**Never** Land.

Princess Diana basked in her role as guide. Mary Martin couldn't have been a better Peter Pan...

...leading us all to a second childhood filled with fairy dust and wonderful thoughts.

And her Amazon sisters welcomed this all-too-brief intermission of real time into their millennia of innocence.

THIS IS THE WORLD AS IT *WAS* IN THE GARDEN. I WONDER--

ARE *WE* THE SERPENTS?

THE MINERAL QUALITY OF THIS SOIL IS *INCREDIBLE*, ALMOST *VIRGIN* IN ITS PURITY.

ONCE *HOME* WAS LIKE THIS. *BEFORE* DROUGHT AND WAR AND PESTILENCE. *BEFORE* THE HATRED CAUSED THE FOOD TO *ROT* IN ITS *SACKS* UPON THE DOCKS...

...SO THAT *GUNS* COULD BE TRANSPORTED *INSTEAD*.

THE LIBRARY CONSISTS OF THIS *ATRIUM*, A GENERAL REFERENCE AND READING ROOM, AND FOUR SMALLER *ANTECHAMBERS*, FOR MORE SPECIFIC AREAS OF INTEREST.

HISTORY, FOR EXAMPLE, MR. CANTWELL, CAN BE FOUND TO YOUR LEFT.

DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH *INBREEDING* AND *HOMOGENEITY* AMONG YOUR AUTHORS, MNEMOSYNE? AFTER ALL, YOURS HAS BEEN THE *ONLY* CULTURE ON THIS ISLAND FOR MILLENNIA.

THAT COULD LEAD TO A *DANGEROUS* SITUATION OF *SLANTED* OPINIONS. *AND* FACTS.

AND *FAITH*. MR. CANTWELL HAS A *POINT*.

I FEEL THAT YOU HAVE BEEN A NATION OF *ABRAHAMS*, MNEMOSYNE. THAT THERE'S NEVER BEEN EVEN *ONE DOUBTING THOMAS* AMONG YOU.

HOW CAN *ANY* PEOPLE GROW IN SPIRITUALITY WITHOUT HAVING *QUESTIONS*? WITHOUT HAVING BEEN TESTED?

MAYBE MNEMOSYNE IS BEING TESTED RIGHT *NOW*, REVEREND. MAYBE *YOU'RE* THE INSTRUMENT OF THE TESTING.

OH, *IGNORE* THEM, MNEMOSYNE. THEY'RE JUST BEING *MEN*. TYPICALLY *THREATENED* BY THIS *PROOF* THAT WOMEN DON'T NEED THEM FOR ANYTHING BUT *ONE* THING.

I'M A UNITARIAN MINISTER, MNEMOSYNE, *NOT* A CHAUVINIST. AND IN *MY* RELIGION, WOMEN AS *WELL* AS MEN ARE ORDAINED.

BUT AS LONG AS *MS.* HALLER BROUGHT IT UP--

--DON'T YOU *MISS* THE *SHARING* GOD INTENDED FOR THE SEXES?

SOME DO. THEY HAVE SWORN THEMSELVES TO ARTEMIS, THE VIRGIN HUNTER, AND ATHENA, THE CHASTE WARRIOR. *OTHERS* CHOOSE THE WAY OF NARCISSUS.

BUT *MOST* OF US FIND SATISFACTION IN EACH *OTHER*-- THREE THOUSAND YEARS *CAN* BE A LONG TIME, REVEREND.

OH.

Where does an Amazon go on those odd days when she has a headache or a splinter or even suffers an injury? She heads out of the city--

--to a small islet that lies off the shores of Paradise. Here, in an atmosphere of verdant life, is the Pantheon of Apollo, dedicated to the healing arts.

Dr. Marakov, the Russian neurosurgeon, spent that afternoon studying herbology with the priestesses in exchange for modern medical information.

Meanwhile, in the capital city, Asmund Lindel visited with the Queen.

The modern reporter is believed to be a direct descendant of the royal scribe, whose function it was to follow the monarch through the day, recording for posterity all royal utterances.

Today I met my journalistic forebear. We made a strange pair, she with her quill and parchment, me with my Bic pen and steno pad. What goes around, indeed, comes around.

THIS IS A STATUE COMMEMORATING THOSE WHO DIED WHILE GUARDING DOOM'S DOORWAY.

THEY WERE ALL FRIENDS.

THE BLOOD OF *MY* FRIENDS STAINS *TIANANMEN SQUARE*. ONE'S SQUASHED BRAIN COMMEMORATED THE COVER OF *NEWSWEEK*.

YOU *MUST* MAKE PEACE WITH THEIR SPIRITS, LIN KOO, OR YOUR BITTERNESS WILL DRAG *YOU* DOWN INTO THE UNDERWORLD TO JOIN THEM.

THEY'RE *DEAD*, HELLENE! *NOT* BREAKFASTING ON POMEGRANATE SEEDS WITH PERSEPHONE!

WHAT KIND OF WORLD DO YOU *COME* FROM THAT GIVES NOT EVEN A *BASIC* UNDERSTANDING OF THE CYCLE TO THEIR CHILDREN?

WHAT CYCLE? I'VE NEVER READ OF THE GREEKS BELIEVING IN REINCARNATION!

YOU HAVE *MANY* MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT AMAZONS, LIN KOO. *FIRST* OF ALL, OUR ORIGINS ARE *NOT* IN GREECE, BUT ON THE *AEGEAN* MAINLAND. SECONDLY--

HECATE TEACHES US THAT WITHOUT DEATH, THERE *IS* NO LIFE.

EXCUSE ME FOR INTERRUPTING, HELLENE, BUT I THOUGHT PERHAPS AN *ORACLE* COULD EXPLAIN TO LIN KOO MORE EASILY.

ESPECIALLY SINCE YOU HAVE ALMOST *NO* PATIENCE WITH OUR VISITORS.

HAS SHE BEEN TERRIBLY *RUDE*, MY DEAR?

YOU MISUNDERSTAND MENALIPPE. WE WERE JUST HAVING A LIVELY *DISCUSSION*. THAT'S ALL.

CAN WE GO, HELLENE?

GO AHEAD, HELLENE. DON'T MIND ME.

I'LL CATCH UP TO YOU LATER.

YOU'VE *NEVER* PLAYED THE LYRE BEFORE, ROVO?

NO, MISS.

THE CHILD IS *TRULY* GIFTED BY *APOLLO*. LISTEN TO HOW HIS FINGERS TOUCH THE SOUL OF THE LYRE, CONTROLLING THE MUSES OF THE STRINGS.

NETE, MESE, AND HYPATE COULD NOT BE *MORE* HONORED.

PLEASE, WHO ARE *THEY*, MISS?

THEY ARE THE *PERSONIFICATIONS* OF THE STRINGS UPON WHICH YOUR FINGERS DANCE. EACH NOTE YOU PICK IS A SWEET WHISPER IN THEIR EARS.

WHAT INSTRUMENTS DO YOU PLAY AT HOME, ROVO?

NONE, MISS.

NONE?

EVEN YOUR *MUSES* COULD NOT PLAY ON STARVING STOMACHS, MISS.

I had a rare opportunity to speak to Princess Diana in the late afternoon, a time of quiet on Paradise Island.

The air was indolent with nectar and buzzed with the beating of hummingbird wings. White doves circled over us, and the sun shone down like honey.

Once more I was struck by the clear blue eyes of the woman I spoke with. Clear with honesty and integrity. Blue with the spirit of Lord Poseidon's oceans.

We spoke of many things. Her belief in her "Mission of Peace" and how it continues unabated, despite the baser aspects of human nature which she has discovered run in all of us, herself included.

She spoke of Myndi Mayer, and of the journalistic sobriquet "Wonder Woman."

She spoke of Professor Julia Kapatelis and her daughter, Vanessa, laughed, and then turned serious when I referred to all three of them as fulfilling the three faces of Eve -- maiden, woman, and crone.

WHAT ABOUT YOU AND SUPERMAN?

I expected her to freeze up. Word has it that the Princess was sensitive to the sensationalistic aspects of journalism.

WHAT ABOUT YOU AND SUPERMAN?

She turned the tables on me.

US? WE'RE JUST GOOD FRIENDS.

SAME HERE.

I like this Wonder Woman.

RABBI HECHT?

DID YOU KNOW YOUR PRIESTESSES WERE A BUNCH OF *ANTI-SEMITES*, PRINCESS?

WHAT??

Religious intolerance in Paradise? Princess Diana's eyes turned a furious violet.

COME WITH ME, RABBI. LOIS, YOU COME, TOO.

The Princess led us into the sanctum. Heavy drapes were drawn against the setting sun's rays.

Priestesses were gathered around a smoking cauldron. Penelope was leading the others in chants, and their strange moaning was a cold wind whistling down my spine.

If the Princess thought this unusual, she made no mention of it, but instead addressed Penelope about Rabbi Hecht's claim.

PENELOPE, PLEASE EXPLAIN...

WE WANT NO OUTSIDERS CONTAMINATING OUR FAITH WITH THEIR HERETICAL NOTIONS, PRINCESS.

NOTIONS?! I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW, LADY, THAT JUDAISM IS 5,750 YEARS OLD--!

--AND IN THE REAL WORLD, THAT'S A HELL OF A LOT LONGER THAN YOUR KIND OF PAGANISM LASTED!

RABBI, PLEASE--!

I'LL APOLOGIZE WHEN SHE DOES!

PENELOPE--

GET HIM OUT. HIS SMELL DEFILES THIS PLACE.

I knew I was sitting on top of a powderkeg of a story. Penelope had, by her words and actions, destroyed the illusion of Paradise.

And if I had had access to a fax machine, a fedex courier, a messenger pigeon -- I would have broken the story then. But part of me was glad I didn't, and couldn't--

Paradise is, after all, such a fragile dream. What harm in letting the sleeper continue for a while?

Princess Diana, meanwhile, having by royal command forced Penelope to reveal Menalippe's whereabouts, had flown off...

...and those left behind needed no oracle to know where she was headed.

LOOK.

LET'S FOLLOW HER!

I THOUGHT YOU WANTED ME TO DO YOUR HAIR LIKE *MINE* FOR THE FEAST.

I DO.

WELL, WE WON'T HAVE TIME IF WE FOLLOW THE PRINCESS. IT'S ALMOST SUNDOWN, AND THE FEAST *STARTS* AT SUNDOWN.

"YOU'RE RIGHT. STILL, I WONDER WHERE SHE WAS GOING."

MENALIPPE?

BRRRRR

SO QUIET.

ARE YOU HERE?

SKHRIK

MENALIPPE? IS THAT YOU?

MENALIPPE?

THE ALTAR'S BEEN MOVED FROM ITS BASE.

MORE LIKE *RIPPED APART.*

GO AWAY SAVE YOURSELF

GO YOUR HIGHNESS RUN

NO!

HAVE *COURAGE*, MENALIPPE--!

--FOR BY THE *AEGIS OF ATHENA*, I AM COMING!

UHHHH--

INCREDIBLY HARD... HOW COULD... MENALIPPE HAVE DONE... IT...

GAEA... GIVE... ME STRENGTH... TO MOVE... THEE...

AAAAAAHHHH!

RRRRUMMMBELLE

THANK YOU, GAEA

SO FAR, SO GOOD. JUST A CAVE--

MENALIPPE?

RETURN DANGER HERE GO BACK

MENALIPPE-- ARE YOU ALL--

WHOOOSHHH

--RIGHT?!

THE CAVE. GONE. NOTHING BUT THE WIND.

NOTHING TO USE TO FIND MY BEARINGS.

DIANA THIS WAY FREEDOM ESCAPE THIS WAY

THE LIGHT. MENALIPPE'S VOICE. FROM BEHIND THAT LIGHT.

SWEET ORACLE, BE BRAVE! I AM COMING!

GREAT GAEA

WHAT DEMON'S SPIT SPAWNED YOU?!

HSSSSSSSSSIT

PRAISE HERMES! IF NOT FOR HIS GIFT OF FLEET FLIGHT, I WOULD BE ALREADY CHURNING WITHIN THAT CREATURE'S--

DEAR HERA, MORE OF THEM!

CAUGHT!

THWAP

HSSSSSSST

ALREADY... TIGHTENING... SQUEEZING...

=GASP=

NOT YET... NOT DONE...

YET!

SFWAPP

AGHHH!

MY TIARA !!

NOOOOOOO!

ARTEMIS! GODDESS AND PATRON, PROTECTOR OF THE WOOD--

IS *THIS* THE FATE OF YOUR DAUGHTER?!

ARTEMIS IS *BEYOND* YOU, PRINCESS.

ALL YOUR PATRONS HAVE DESERTED YOU, *AND* THE AMAZONS.

"MENALIPPE?"

THEY ARE GONE, BUT NO MATTER. FOR A NEW ORDER ARISES.

THE *MOERAE* HAVE DECREED IT. I HAVE READ THE SIGNS.

I HAVE *SEEN* THE THREAD WITH WHICH *CLOTHO* SPINS. I HAVE *PLAYED* THE DICE OF CHANCE BY WHICH *LACHESIS* DEALS...

...AND I HAVE BOWED MY HEAD AND ACCEPTED *ATROPOS*, THE INESCAPABLE FATE FROM WHICH THERE IS *NO* APPEAL.

WELCOME THE SAVIOR, PRINCESS DIANA. OUR *TRUE* DESTINY--

-- FOR *IN* TRUTH WE AMAZONS *ARE* OF ARES. WE *ARE* WAR'S DAUGHTERS.

"...TO...

"SISTERS...

"...ERIS!"

Night had fallen in Paradise, and we were to commence. But the Queen did not look happy.

I'M SURE EVERYTHING IS FINE, YOUR MAJESTY. THE PRINCESS AND MENALIPPE ARE PROBABLY JUST BEING FASHIONABLY LATE.

"FASHIONABLY LATE"? WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

IT MEANS *MISSING* THE RABBI'S *SERMON*.

"IF YOU MEAN TO SAY WE SHOULD START *WITHOUT* THEM, WE CANNOT. MENALIPPE *ALWAYS* PERFORMS THE OPENING RITES...

I *KNEW* WE SHOULD HAVE FOLLOWED THE PRINCESS.

AND HAVE *US* LATE AS WELL, LIN KOO? NO. I WOULD NOT INSULT MY GUESTS, MY QUEEN, OR MY GODDESSES IN THAT WAY.

WHAT IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO THEM?

I SAY, *START* THE FEAST, SO OUR GUESTS CAN GO *BACK* TO WHERE THEY *BELONG*!

YOU'VE BEEN *LESS* THAN *HOSPITABLE* LATELY, PENELOPE. EVEN TO YOUR *SISTERS*. IS THERE SOMETHING YOU'RE NOT *TELLING* US?

I SAY, LET US ORGANIZE A *SEARCH PARTY*!

THAT WILL NOT BE NECESSARY, PHILLIPUS.

FORGIVE US, MOTHER. WE WERE JUST BEING...

...FASHIONABLY LATE.

The Princess had been furious with Menalippe. Was she that forgiving? Or was she that adept at hiding her feelings in front of a room full of subjects and strangers?

I didn't think so. Diana is a woman whose eyes tell of her soul. I looked to her eyes. They told me nothing.

Nothing at all.

LET THE FEAST OF FIVE BEGIN!

END.

IN THE BEGINNING, NIGHT WAS VAST AND DARK AND EMPTY WITH NOTHINGNESS, UNTIL TWO SONS FILLED HER VOID.

THE FIRST WAS DEATH, WHO HAUNTS MEN IN LIFE, AND THE SECOND SLEEP, THE LITTLE BROTHER WHO TEMPERS DEATH WITH A POCKETFUL OF MIRACLES CALLED DREAMS.

FOR LIFE CAN BE LONG AND WEARY, AND WHILE DEATH IS SOMETIMES RELEASE AND DELIVERANCE, IT IS SLEEP WHO IS RENEWAL, WHO OPENS DOORS ONTO MORPHEUS THE DREAM-BRINGER.

AND DREAMS ARE HUMAN SALVATION.

HE DREAMS HE IS HOLDING THE PRINCESS AMAZON. SHE IS A SLEEPING BEAUTY IN HIS ARMS, WHO MUST AWAKEN IF SHE IS TO BE SAFE.

"DIANA."

BUT SHE DOESN'T HEAR HIM, FOR SHE IS LOST IN HER OWN DREAM, A NIGHTMARE OF METAMORPHOSIS.

BARK SPLINTERS HER FLESH. HER EARS ARE MUFFED IN WOOD, AND SHE IS CHOKING ON THE FOLIAGE OF HER TONGUE.

SHE IS SLIPPING FROM HIM.

HE BENDS DOWN AND WHISPERS HER NAME.

AND THEN SHE IS GONE, SWEPT AWAY BY DISCORDANT PASSIONS HE IS AFRAID TO RECOGNIZE, THOUGH HE MUST, IF THE WOMAN IS TO HAVE A CHANCE...

...OF RETURNING FROM THE INFERNO...

...TO STAND AT THE GATE OF PARADISE...

...AND RECLAIM HER SOUL.

DIANNNAAAAAA!!

SREEEEK!

HONNNKKKK!

GOOD LORD--!

WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT? YOU KNOW YOU COULD'VE KILLED US BOTH?!

ME, ANYWAY!

DIANA--

DIANA? WHAT'S SHE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

RRRRIPPPP

SWOOOSHH

HERMES--?

HEY! WHAT'S GOING ON?

=SIGH= THAT GUY'S GONNA GIVE ME GRAY HAIRS.

DIANA?

I sat on a dais overflowing with a cornucopia of bounty, surrounded by classical beauties older than the Parthenon.

My fellow delegates listened to Menalippe, high priestess of Amazon society, intone the blessings of Hestia and Themis on this summit and Feast of Five. But something seemed wrong to me.

Menalippe spoke with about as much conviction as Phyllis Schafly would stumping for the Equal Rights Amendment.

I glanced toward the Princess Diana to see her reaction. There wasn't any.

Until she felt me looking at her. I couldn't look away, and she wouldn't let go.

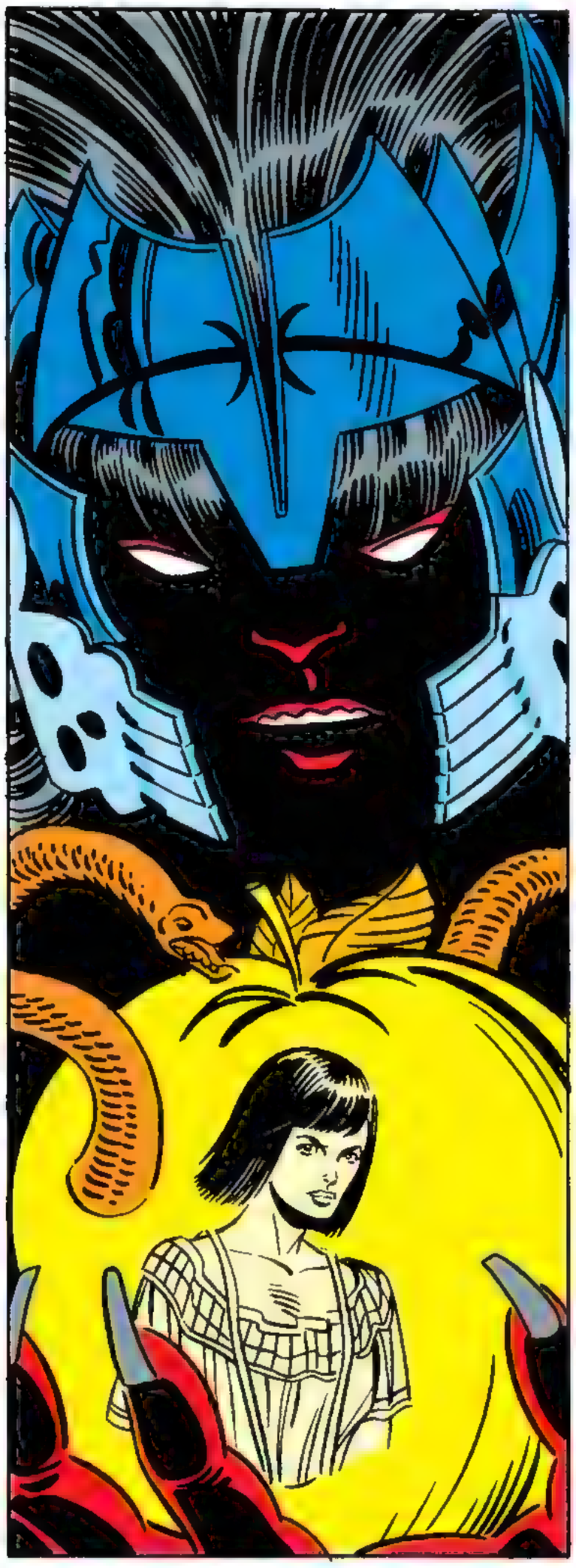
I was a trespasser in the wastelands of her karma, and for that, I would be punished.

WONDER WOMAN
Created by William Moulton Marston

"POISONED SOULS"

GEORGE PEREZ	MINDY NEWELL	CHRIS MARRINAN	MIKE MACHLAN	AGUSTIN MAS	CARL GAFFORD	MARK WAID ASSOC.	KAREN BERGER
PLOT	SCRIPT	PENCILS	INKS	LETTERER	COLORIST	EDITOR	EDITOR

I didn't know whose eyes really had me, or who was really deciding my punishment.

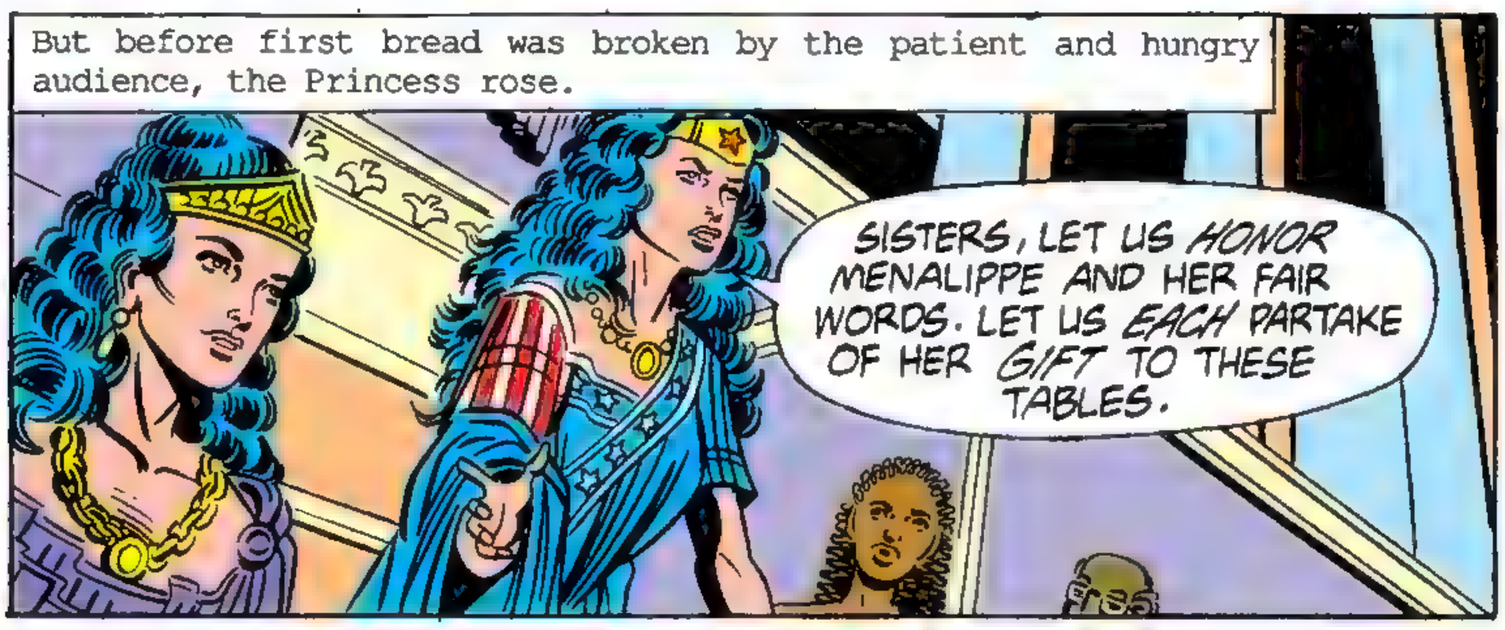


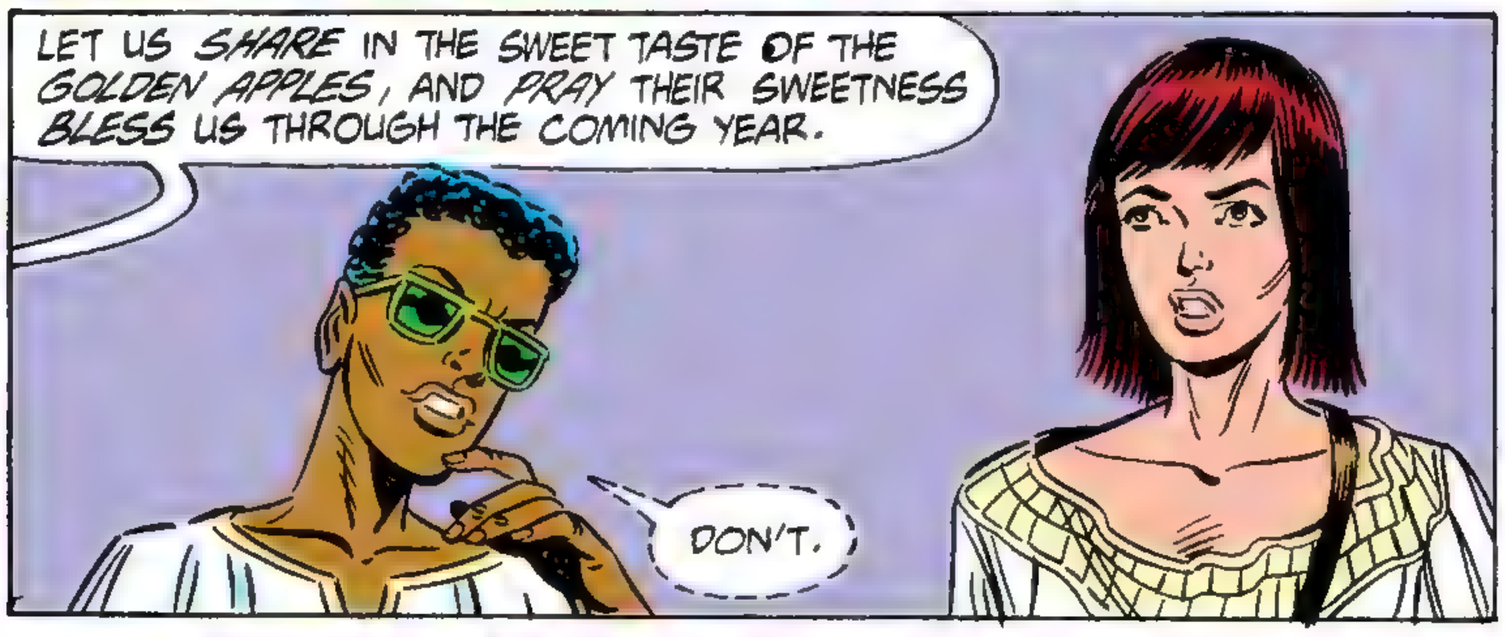
But I felt as if a decision had been made, and with that, I felt oddly free, as if affairs would lead me to their proper conclusion.

Forewarned, as they say, is forearmed.

Meanwhile, Menalippe was wrapping up her sermonette.

But before first bread was broken by the patient and hungry audience, the Princess rose.





So I wasn't the only one boxing with shadows.
I asked Rovo why not. After all, he couldn't see the emptiness in Wonder Woman's eyes.
But he heard it in her voice.
We palmed our apples.
5

And whoever it was --

--she was watching us.

NOT HUNGRY, LOIS?

I'M ON A DIET.

SHE IS LOSING

HEY, ROOMIE. WHAT'S UP?

LOOK, I'M SORRY, BUT WE'VE *GOT* TO BE IN HACKENSACK BY *THREE*. I'VE GOT TO *TESTIFY*. YOU KNOW, THAT TETERBORO CASE I WAS TELLING YOU ABOUT?

THEY'RE *COUNTING* ON ME. I CAN'T DISAPPOINT THEM. BESIDES, MY CHECKBOOK COULD USE THE DEPOSIT.

WHY DON'T WE GET *BACK* IN THE CAR, AND WE CAN *TALK* ABOUT WHAT'S BOTHERING YOU.

WE'VE *STILL* GOT THE WHOLE STATE OF NEW JERSEY TO--

NO?

NO.

DIANA IS IN NEED. *GREAT* NEED.

HER SOUL NO LONGER INHABITS THE MORTAL PLANE.

WHAT?! SHE'S *DEAD*?

NO. HER SOUL IS NOT IN HADES. IT IS... SOMEWHERE ELSE. NOW, PLEASE, STEPHEN, LEAVE ME *BE*.

I NEED TO CONCENTRATE IF I AM TO FIND HER.

My concerns about Princess Diana and Menalippe were vanishing at a speed inversely proportionate to the amount of food piling on my plate.

Everyone was enjoying themselves. There was free and open dialogue. Laughing. Singing. Music. Women danced. Wine flowed. But then--

--so did the hemlock.

PHAUGH!!

TRAFE!

WHAT?

THIS FOOD IS *NOT KOSHER!*

RABBI, WE FOLLOWED YOUR INSTRUCTIONS *MOST* CAREFULLY.

LIAR!

COMPLAINTS AGAIN? HOW DARE YOU?

YOU TRIED TO *POISON* ME! WELL, IT'S NOT GOING TO *WORK*, SISTER! *LOTS* OF PEOPLE HAVE HAD THE SAME *IDEA* IN THE LAST 3000 YEARS! ROMANS! CRUSADERS! INQUISITORS! RUSSIANS! ARABS!

BUT *WE'VE* SURVIVED THEM *ALL!* WE EVEN SURVIVED *HITLER!*

AND WE'LL SURVIVE *YOU* AND YOUR MERRY LITTLE BAND OF AMAZONS, TOO!

YOU AND YOUR RITUALS! THE FOOD IS DELICIOUS. IT IS ONE OF THE ONLY THINGS WOMEN ARE GOOD FOR!

YOU WANNA START SOMETHING, RUSSKIE?

PUT UP YOUR DUKES!

WOMEN, DON'T TAKE THAT KIND OF SUBMISSIVE GARBAGE ANYMORE, MARAKOV! AMAZONS! DON'T JUST SIT THERE! RISE UP! SHOW 'EM WHAT WE'RE MADE OF!

PHYLLIS IS RIGHT! LET US CROSS INTO MAN'S WORLD, AND CONQUER THEM FOREVER!

HAIL, PHYLLIS! HAIL, HELLENE!

YOUR TONGUE WILL BE YOUR UNDOING.

DON'T YOU EVER HAVE AN ORIGINAL THOUGHT, IPHTHIME?

YOU SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DEFY THE NATURAL ORDER?

WHOSE NATURAL ORDER, REVEREND?

NO NEED TO GET SNOTTY, MNEMOSYNE. EVEN THE BIBLE TELLS US, IT IS BETTER TO MARRY THAN TO BURN.

REVEREND, WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS, CANTWELL!

YOU'RE INSULTING OUR HOSTS' BELIEFS AND CULTURE YOU--

HEY, REVEREND, YOU KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF THE LADY. AND YOU BE CAREFUL, HONEY, OR YOU MIGHT FIND YOURSELF WITH A STRANGE BED-FELLOW!

BED! BED! IS THAT ALL ANY OF YOU MEN CAN THINK ABOUT!

YOU'RE ALL PIGS!

TRAITOR

TRAITOR!

WHAT?!

HOW DARE YOU SUBMIT YOURSELF TO A WHITE WHEN YOUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS ARE CRYING OUT FOR FREEDOM!

DON'T YOU KNOW WHAT THEY CALL YOU BEHIND YOUR BACK?

I DOUBT VERY MUCH PHILLIPUS KNOWS OR WOULD UNDERSTAND THE TERMINOLOGY YOU'RE REFERRING TO, MISS NITUMBE.

DON'T GIVE ME THAT!

YOU BRITS ARE ALL ALIKE! SO FRIGHTFULLY POLITE. WELL, JUST REMEMBER THE MAU MAU, CANTWELL. JUST REMEMBER THEM.

I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE ALL THINKING!

HE'S HAITIAN. HE'S RESPONSIBLE. HE DID IT.

PLEASE, EVERYONE! CONTROL YOURSELVES! SIT DOWN BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

I ORDER IT!

YOU ORDER IT? YOU??!

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? YOU'RE NOTHING! A MAN! HERE BECAUSE I BROUGHT YOU. HERE ON MY AUTHORITY!

YOU UPSTART! I AM QUEEN! I GIVE ORDERS! NO ONE ELSE!

NOW EVERYONE SIT DOWN AND BE SILENT!!

THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE!

I'VE GOT TO GET SOME PICTURES!

NO! NO PICTURES!

STUPID AMERICAN JOURNALIST! WHY CAN'T YOU LEARN?!

HEY!!

THEY WERE YOUR COLLEAGUES! THEY TAPED HIM! THEY SHOWED IT ON TELEVISION!

ALL IN THE NAME OF FREEDOM, THEY SAID! ALL FOR DEMOCRACY, THEY SAID!

SMASSHH

PLEASE, LIN KOO. MISS LANE WAS *NOT* IN CHINA.

SHE IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT HAPPENED TO THE STUDENTS WHO SPOKE OUT.

SHUT UP, BLIND BOY!

YOU CAN'T *SEE*! YOU CAN'T *KNOW* WHAT IT WAS TO *WATCH* IT!

CRAACKH

STOP IT, LIN KOO. YOU'RE HYSTERICAL.

WHAT DID THEY *GET* FOR BEING SO BRAVE AND OUTSPOKEN? *SHOT!* *LIVE* AND *IN COLOR!*

AND YOU GOT YOUR *STORY!*

Lin Koo had a valid argument. In fact, it was one I had heard frequently since the Tiananmen massacre.

BOMPHH

But there was more than grief and anger and frustration driving Lin Koo, and all the others, too.

There was madness.

SCHWACKK

The madness of hell breaking loose, and I knew it had to do with those wretched golden apples.

POWWWW

I SUGGEST WE GET THE CHILDREN OUT OF HARM'S WAY.

YOU'RE RIGHT LET'S GO, ROVO.

I had to think about the kids' safety. But part of me wanted to stay. After all, this was a major news story breaking right in front of my eyes. And I do mean breaking.

Princess Diana stood in the center of the storm, the eye of the hurricane. Responsible for the mad whirling vortex around her, but apart.

It seemed impossible that this was the same incredible woman who had brought us here. I was afraid to even look at her...afraid I'd turn to stone.

Others were more brave than I.

I'M *WARNING* YOU, PRINCESS. THE WORLD WILL NOT LOOK *KINDLY* UPON THE *TREATMENT* OF ITS CITIZENS BY *YOUR* COUNTRYWOMEN!

SOME MAY CONSTRUE IT TO BE AN ACT *PREPARATORY* TO *WAR!*

AND YOUR AMAZONS COULD NOT *POSSIBLY* STAND UP TO MODERN-DAYYYYYYYIIIIIIEEEEEE!

NO

GREAT GAEA WHAT'S HAPPENING

THIS IS ALL WRONG MOTHER WHERE ARE YOU GAEA!

GODDESS WHY HAVE YOU DESERTED!

ME

NO!

DIANA! YOU HAVEN'T BEEN DESERTED! COME BACK!

COME BACK!

IT'S NO GOOD. I'VE LOST CONTACT WITH HER.

WELL... RE-ESTABLISH IT! YOU CAN'T STOP NOW!

IT'S NO USE, STEPHEN. DIANA'S SOUL HAS BEEN CUT LOOSE FROM HOPE. AND WITHOUT HOPE, THE SOUL HAS NO ANCHOR. IT DRIFTS IN THE SEA OF DESPAIR AND CONFUSION.

BUT *MINE* HASN'T BEEN CUT OFF! AND *NEITHER* HAS *YOURS!* NOW, DAMN IT, TRY AGAIN!

IT'S ALL BEEN FOR *NAUGHT*. THE OLYMPIAN IDEAL, DIANA'S MISSION, MANKIND'S UTOPIAN GOALS. GREAT DREAMS.

TURNED TO DUST. DEAD.

DREAMS CAN'T DIE!

BUT THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO DREAM *CAN*. AND *DO*.

The mob followed us out onto the street, tumbling out of the banquet hall like mad Frenchmen drunk with the wine of revolution.

We turned down what seemed to be a deserted alley...

...and ran smack-dab into Madam Defarge...

...Or her Themysciran equivalent.

LET US THROUGH.

IN A HURRY TO FILE YOUR STORY, LOIS? MAY I SUGGEST A HEADLINE?

HOW ABOUT "THEMYSCIRA SUMMIT COLLAPSES AMIDST ANGRY WORDS"? OR "CULTURAL EXCHANGE DISMAL FAILURE"? I'LL EVEN GIVE YOU A *DIRECT QUOTE* FROM THE *AMBASSADOR* HERSELF. STRICTLY *ON* THE RECORD.

THIS "*GREAT MISSION*" OF MINE. IT WAS ALL A *FARCE*. AN *ACT*. DESIGNED TO PROVE WHAT MISERABLE PEOPLE WE ALL *REALLY* ARE.

THERE'S ONLY *ONE* MISERABLE PERSON ON *THIS* ISLAND, LADY!

AND I'M *LOOKIN'* AT HER!

NO, MISS LANE! CAN'T YOU *SEE*? *THIS* IS NOT WONDER WOMAN!

SHE WOULD *NEVER* TALK LIKE THIS!

HE'S RIGHT, LOIS.

YEAH. I FIGURED THAT OUT. OKAY, *LADY*...

...WHO ARE YOU? WHERE'S *PRINCESS DIANA*?

ARE YOU REALLY GIVING THIS BLIND CHILD *CREDENCE*, LOIS? HE CAN'T EVEN SEE HIS *OWN* FACE, MUCH LESS *MINE*.

LIN KOO, *AM* I OR AM I *NOT* DIANA?

MAYBE. MAYBE *NOT*. ONE THING I'VE LEARNED AT HOME. LEADERS ARE NOT TO BE *TRUSTED!*

WHAT??

HOW *DARE* YOU, YOU *IMPUDENT--!!*

LOOK OUT!!

NO!

RUN, LIN KOO!-- OOOFF--

GET *OUT OF MY WAY!*

HELP!

YOU CAN'T RUN FROM *ME*, LIN KOO!

THE GODS *MUST* BE CRAZY--

SHE'S GONNA *KILL* THAT KID!

STOP IT! ARE YOU NUTS??

FWAACKK

NO. YOU ARE.

There was the sensation of something lashing out--I could almost hear the crack of a bullwhip--and then she had me.

STOP IT! STOP IT!

PLEASE! SHE DIDN'T MEAN IT! DON'T!

Paradise retreated--

--replaced by an abyss filled with grinning teeth bared in a mad grimace.

NO SHE MUSTN'T

I think I started hallucinating then from the oxygen deprivation.

I saw Wonder Woman--the real Wonder Woman--in a soup of darkness. She was sweaty, dirty, kicking and struggling with invisible bedclothes as though a child caught in some manic nightmare...

...and then she started to melt, like Margaret Hamilton in "The Wizard of Oz."

Only it wasn't Margaret Hamilton, and it wasn't Wonder Woman.

It was the Wicked Witch of the West, and she was melting--

--melting--

--melting--

Gone.

=SNIFF= BAKED APPLES?

MISS LANE--

YES, I KNOW, ROVO.

MR. CANTWELL, *NEITHER* OF *US* ATE ANY OF THOSE GOLDEN APPLES. DID *YOU*--

NO. I'M *ALLERGIC* TO APPLES.

BUT I BET *LIN KOO* DID.

I ATE ONE. WHAT'S IT TO *YOU*?

WE THINK THEY WERE TAINTED.

DON'T BE RI*DI*CULOUS. I DON'T FEEL THE LEAST *BIT* SICK.

BUT YOU *ARE*. IN A WAY.

WHAT WAY?

CAN'T YOU SEE THE WAY YOU'RE TALKING, THE HATE IN YOUR VOICE?

SO?

OH, I GET IT. CHINESE GIRLS ARE QUIET, POLITE, AND SELF-EFFACING, RIGHT?

WRONG.

=SIGH= NEVER MIND. WE'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL IT'S OUT OF HER SYSTEM.

Y'KNOW, THERE WAS TROUBLE *BEFORE* THE FEAST, BETWEEN RABBI HECHT AND SOME PRIESTESSES--

AND THOSE *DAMN* GOLDEN APPLES WERE *IN* THE TEMPLE!

ISN'T *MENALIPPE* THE CHIEF PRIESTESS? AND DIDN'T *SHE* BRING THE APPLES *TO* THE FEAST?

AND DIANA WENT *LOOKING* FOR *MENALIPPE*!

NEIGGHHH

HORSES?

THE GODS MUST BE SMILING. CANTWELL, DO YOU RIDE?

I'VE JUMPED A FENCE OR TWO IN MY DAY.

MENALIPPE! THE ENGLISHMAN AND THE AMERICAN WOMAN--

THEY'RE ESCAPING ON HORSEBACK!

THEY WON'T GET FAR!

AFTER THEM! STOP THEM ANY WAY YOU CAN, AND IF THE CHILDREN GIVE YOU TROUBLE--

"KILL THEM, TOO!"

FOOLS.

YOUR FRIENDS FORGET PARADISE IS AN ISLAND.

JUST WHERE DO THEY EXPECT TO ESCAPE TO?

Robert Cantwell turned out to be a more than adequate equestrian as he led us deeper into the woods of Paradise, Lin Koo clinging to his back like a cat, with Rovo and me rather inadequately bringing up the rear.

I didn't know where we were headed, but at that point I didn't much care for anything except putting distance between us and the Amazons.

LEFT, WE TURN LEFT HERE!

Unfortunately, the Amazons had other ideas.

WE'RE BEING *FOLLOWED!*

We made a right, a left, and another quick right. We lost them. And us.

WHERE ARE WE?

DOOM'S DOORWAY. BUT IT'S OPEN.

SO?

WHEN I WAS HERE WITH HELLENE, THAT ALTAR *BLOCKED* THE CAVE.

AND THAT WAS ONLY THIS *MORNING*.

NO. YOU CHILDREN STAY HERE. MISS LANE--

NOT BY OURSELVES, WE'RE NOT!

The kids were adamant. We finally gave in, not willing to waste more time arguing, especially since we could hear the posse behind us.

The cave was dark and cold and creepy. Even with the torches, we could barely see...

...which gave Rovo something of an advantage.

MISS WONDER WOMAN?

What did he see, what did he hear, that we missed?

LISTEN TO HER! IT

GO BACK DON'T

ISN'T ME! IT'S

There was a presence in the cave. Something that filled me with agitation and a desire to pick a fight, part company, and sow dissension.

LET ME THROUGH!

WAIT--

NO TIME, IF DIANA IS HERE--

IIIIIIIII!!

-GASP- GASP- GASP- GOD - GASP- GASP- WHAT THE

HELL??!

NOT QUITE, LOIS LANE.

TO BE CONTINUED!

A Journey to the Other Side of Paradi: e

By Lois Lane

Fourth in a series of Daily Planet articles on the Themysciran Summit

I am a prisoner of maleficent forces in a jailhouse of moldering bark, my fate one hundred feet above me.And if a miracle doesn't happen soon,I will join Wonder Woman as sculpture worked in wood -- matching bookends in hell.

DIVIDED WE FALL

GEORGE PÉREZ - CHRIS MARRINAN
PLOT — PENCILS

MINDY NEWELL - ROBERT CAMPANELLA
SCRIPT — INKS

AGUSTIN MAS - CARL GAFFORD
LETTERS — COLORS

MARK WAID - KAREN BERGER
ASSOC. EDITOR — EDITOR

I try to still my rising panic.Somewhere above me is Paradise.Somewhere above me is rescue.

CANTWELL! CANTWELL!

THANK GOD--

YES! ARE YOU HURT! ANYTHING BROKEN!

HOLD ON! I'LL COME DOWN!

NO! GO GET HELP!

LOTS OF HELP!

The shadows bend.There is a glint of gold in the darkness. Something is moving below me.

It looks at me, and I get nauseous.It smiles, and my muscles tense.It turns away and I am furious.

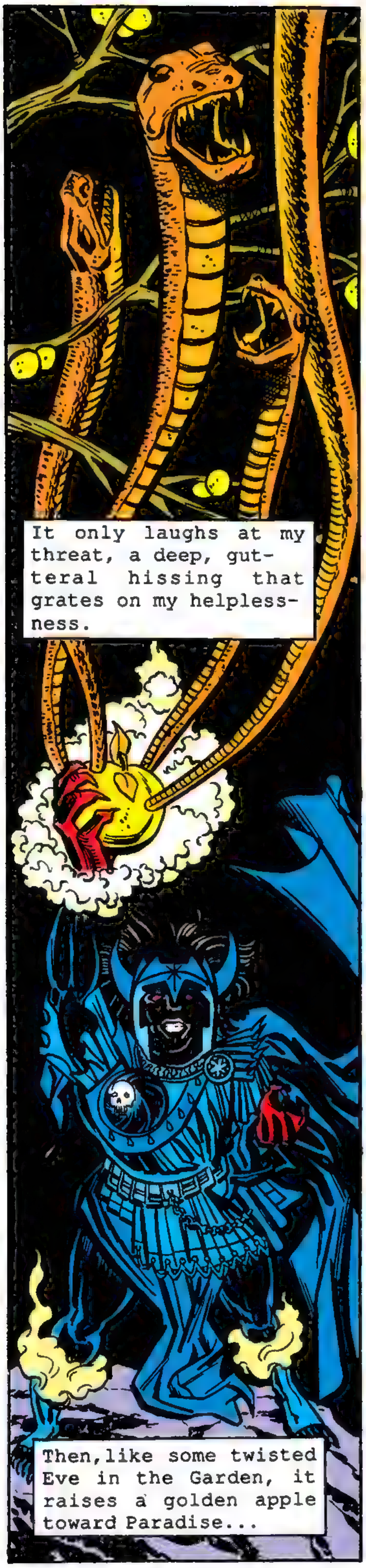
I want to scream, kick, bite,hate.I'm so sick of fools, hypocrites -- fed up with snobs and bigots.

Now I know the monster. I've seen this woman-thing before. In Selma. At Kent State.In Saigon and in Bensonhurst.

In Themyscira.

IT'S NOT GONNA WORK! I'VE GOT YOUR NUMBER...

...AND I'LL SEE TO IT THE AMAZONS GET IT, TOO!



It only laughs at my threat, a deep, gut-teral hissing that grates on my helpless-ness.

Then, like some twisted Eve in the Garden, it raises a golden apple toward Paradise...

...and great serpents erupt from its pulp.

The monsters snake their way up a lattice of tree limbs, higher and higher, uncoiling live wires of death.

ANSWER ME, HERMES!

WHY DIDN'T YOU LEAVE YOURSELF SOME KIND OF *ESCAPE* CLAUSE OR FORMULATE A *CONTINGENCY* PLAN JUST IN *CASE*?!

DID YOU *HAVE* TO GIVE AWAY *ALL* OF YOUR TRICKS?

DIANA *NEEDED* MY CADUCEUS IF SHE WAS TO *SUCCESSFULLY* TRANSPORT THE DELEGATES ACROSS CHAOS, STEPHEN.

GREAT! AND NOW *DIANA'S* IN TROUBLE--WHO KNOWS *WHAT'S* HAPPENED TO THE DELEGATES--

THIS WOULDN'T HAPPEN IN THE *AIR FORCE*, I CAN TELL YOU *THAT!*

WHAT WOULD BE THE FIRST THING THE AIR FORCE WOULD DO, STEPHEN?

HUH? IDENTIFY THE AGGRESSOR, ASSUMING THERE *WAS* ONE.

EXACTLY, WHICH I HAVE BEEN *ENDEAVORING* TO DO.

THERE IS *MORE* THAN MY INHERENT IMPOTENCE BLOCKING MY ATTEMPTS TO BREACH CHAOS, STEPHEN.

SOMETHING, OR SOMEONE, IS INTERFERING, AS WELL. BUT IT *WILL* BE STOPPED. I *SWEAR* IT.

BUT *WHEN*, AND *HOW*?

HOW DID I GET HERE MENALIPPE MENALIPPE STANDING WITH STANDING WITH WHO

DIANA! PRINCESS DIANA! DIANA, CAN YOU HEAR ME?

DIANA!

PRINCESS! YOU HAVE TO HEAR ME!!

WE *NEED* YOU!

SHE IS *BEYOND* NEED. BEYOND HELP. BEYOND REASON OR *RESCUE*.

AS YOU SOON WILL BE.

WHO *ARE* YOU?!

"I AM THE *DAUGHTER OF WAR*, AND *WAR'S SISTER*. I AM HIS *MOTHER*, AND HIS *AUNT*. I AM THE *BATTLE-GROUND OF ARES*, UPON WHOM MANKIND HAS TRAMPLED AND DESTROYED EACH OTHER SINCE THE BEGINNING.

"I AM *STRIFE*. I AM *DISCORD*."

YOU ARE *ERIS*!

"SO. THE PROFESSOR *KNOWS* ME."

LOIS. I'M SORRY. SHOULD HAVE REALIZED SOONER. *GOLDEN* APPLES. *APPLES OF DISCORD*--

DON'T BLAME YOURSELF, ROBERT!

"YOUR FRIEND IS RIGHT, MORTAL. EVEN THE *GODDESSES* FELL PREY TO ME."

IT WAS MY GIFT OF THE *APPLE* THAT LED TO THE *JUDGMENT OF PARIS*. MY GIFT THAT LED APHRODITE TO AWARD THE FAIR *HELEN* TO HIM, THOUGH SHE WAS *MARRIED* TO *MENELAUS*.

MY GIFT THAT LED TO THE FALL OF ANCIENT *TROY*, A WAR THAT FED ON THE JEALOUSIES AND LUSTS OF MEN FOR THEIR WOMEN.

THE AMAZONS FELL BELOW THOSE ANCIENT WALLS. THEY FALL NOW IN *THEMYSCIRA*, DESTROYING THEMSELVES AS MY FRUIT DESTROYS THE BARRIERS OF HIDDEN HATREDS.

THE DREAMS OF THE OLYMPIAN WOMEN ARE *THWARTED*, AS MY FATHER ARES *PREDICTED* THEY WOULD BE.

THE DELEGATES WILL REPORT *FAILURE*. THEY WILL POINT THEIR *FINGERS*. THERE WILL BE *ACCUSATIONS* AND *THREATS*.

AND MAN WILL ONCE AGAIN BE BENT ON THE *SELF-DESTRUCTION* THAT IN HIS *DESTINY*.

I *KNOW* YOU NOW! YOU'RE *WANG MU*, THE MONSTER-MOTHER! IT'S *YOU* WHO CAUSES *DISEASE* AND *DEATH*!

I WON'T *LET* YOU! I *WON'T*!

LIN KOO--!

AHEEEEEE!

LIN KOO!

UHHH-- ALL RIGHT, IT'S ALL RIGHT, I'VE GOT YOU.

=SNIFF=

DON'T CRY, LIN KOO, IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY.

HOLD ON, ROBERT, I'M COMING UP!

Through it all, Eris made no move to stop us. I think we amused her.

LOIS BE CAREFUL WHAT IS GOING ON IS THIS A DREAM NO

NO DREAM ERIS WILL DESTROY MUST STOP HOW

TO STOP

MISS DIANA.

MISS DIANA.

MISS DIANA, PLEASE HELP US.

PLEASE.

SNIFF SNIFF

GO BACK

MISS DIANA?

GO BACK

MISS DIANA, WHERE ARE YOU?

WHY DO YOU TEASE ME, MISS DIANA? YOU KNOW I CAN'T SEE YOU.

GO BACK

BACK *WHERE*? TO *THEMYSCIRA*? THEY'RE TRYING TO *KILL* US THERE!

AND MISS LANE. MR. CANTWELL. LIN KOO. WHAT ABOUT *THEM*?

FOLLOW MY VOICE

ALL RIGHT, I'M OUT! *NOW* WHAT?

WHINNNEY

MISS DIANA? IS THAT YOU?

GO

GOOD BOY ROVO

WHO IS AIDING YOU, BOY? SHE WILL RUE THE DAY!

AS FOR YOU--!

RIDE AWAY, CHILD. RIDE TO YOUR DEATH!

I had reached Mr.Cantwell.We were trying to calm down Lin Koo when we overheard Eris muttering Rovo Quashi's name.

She was working some kind of magic spell on the apple.

Its color faded to crystal, then darkened as clouds seemed to gather, break up...

...and reform into the familiar image of Menalippe,high priestess of the Amazons. Eris was whispering to her--and, somehow, controlling her.

THAT WITCH IS LAYING AN AMBUSH FOR THE BOY!

EH?

PING

THAT WASN'T SMART, MR. CANTWELL.

Her feral eyes glowed...

...and the Tree of Discord came to life...

...winding, enveloping, growing all about us and around us, feeding off our flesh and draining our blood.

We were victims of a vampiric plant.

DIANA! HELP US!

PLEASE!!

LIN KOO LOIS MR CANTWELL YES I WILL HELP I WILL

NO

THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN DO FOR THEM DIANA YOU MUST CONCENTRATE ON THE BOY

HE IS THEIR ONLY HOPE, DIANA.

YOUR ONLY HOPE.

LORD, PLEASE LET HIM GET THROUGH TO HER.

We had no way of knowing at the time, but Wonder Woman had somehow managed to contact Rovo Quashi. We thought he was still somewhere above us, stranded in the cave...

And it was war at its crudest . and most brutal, for women and men were at each other's throats, true animals in their ferocity.

...when, in actuality, he was miles away, astride Princess Diana's horse and re-entering the now war-torn city of Themyscira.

Eris and her Apples of Discord had destroyed three thousand years of Amazonian ideals and values.

Rovo rode into an apocalypse, and by what miracle he survived...

...only the heavens and the secrets within them know.

FOOLISH CHILD.

YOU SHOULD HAVE STAYED WHERE YOU WERE--

NO!

STAY OUT OF IT, HERETIC--

AND STAY ALIVE!

UHHH!

MENALIPPE! NO!

IS *THAT* WHY WE ARE FIGHTING?

TO *BUTCHER* THE *HELPLESS*?

I WON'T *DO* IT, MENALIPPE. NOT IN THEMYSCIRA. *NEVER* IN THEMYSCIRA.

WHAT ARE YOU *DOING*!

LET ME GO, HELLENE!

SO YOU CAN *MURDER* A *BLIND CHILD*, *STAB* HIM IN THE *BACK*?

SORRY, HELLENE.

BUT THERE'S NO ROOM IN PARADISE FOR THOSE WHO ARE NOT WILLING TO *KILL* FOR IT.

SWAPPP

EGHH

KILLING... *FOR* PARADISE?

HELLENE?

GREAT GAEA, MOTHER OF US ALL--WHAT ARE WE *DOING*--PENELOPE? *MENALIPPE*!...

DID YOU SEE WHERE THE BRAT *WENT*?

IN HERE--

THERE! SEE? DIANA'S HORSE.

IMPUDENT BOY! *DARING* TO RIDE HIM!

WELL, IT WILL BE THE *LAST* RIDE HE SHALL *EVER*--

LORD HERMES?!?!

TOUCH EVEN *ONE* EYELASH BELONGING TO THE MORTAL STRIPLING, MENALIPPE, AND YOU SHALL ***RUE*** THE DAY YOU CROSSED A GOD.

M-MY LORD--

SILENCE!

--OR BEFORE *ZEUS*, I WILL LAY *WASTE* TO YOU AND YOUR *KIND FOREVER!*

WE HEAR YOU, LORD HERMES!

AND WE *WILL* OBEY! WE *SWEAR* IT!

THROW *OFF* THE EVIL YOU WEAR NOW SO *PROUDLY*, MENALIPPE! SHED *LIGHT* ON THE DEMON OF THE DARK WHOSE SHADOW CROSSES YOUR PATH!

REDEEM YOURSELF BEFORE *THIS* GOD AND THE GODDESSES WHO *BLESSED* YOU BEFORE IT IS TOO *LATE*--

MISS PRINCESS? I AM HERE. WHERE ARE YOU?

I HAVE DONE WHAT YOU ASKED. I HAVE RETURNED. WHY DO YOU NOT ANSWER ME?

ROVO WHY DON'T YOU HEAR ME ROVO CAN YOU ANSWER ME

ROVO IF YOU HEAR ME LISTEN YOU MUST GO TO MY MOTHER THE QUEEN TELL HER TO GO TO THE CAVE OF DOOMS DOORWAY WITH ROVO CAN YOU HEAR ME

ROVO ANSWER ME IT'S ME PRINCESS DIANA WONDER WOMAN ROVO

THE LITTLE *BOY*? WHAT IS *HE* DOING HERE?

ROVO. THIS IS QUEEN HIPPOLYTE. WHERE IS MY *DAUGHTER*?

MISS DIANA? WHY DO YOU NOT ANSWER?

LORD HERMES YOU MUST HELP ME AGAIN TO REACH ROVO HE NEEDS MY

LORD HERMES WHERE HAVE YOU DESERTED ME LORD

I HAVE DONE ALL I CAN.

OKAY, JUST REST NOW. IT'S ALL RIGHT, I'M HERE.

IT IS NOW UP TO YOUR MOTHER AND HER AMAZONS, THEIR FAITH AND THEIR CONVIC-TIONS.

SIGH, YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW I'M HERE, DO YOU?

THAT'S OKAY, PAL. YOU SLEEP. SOMETHING TELLS ME YOU'VE EARNED IT.

Something was happening. The dead bark that was Wonder Woman shuddered, and her wooden eyes seemed to blink.

Scenes of Paradise reawakening shimmered on the golden skins of the apples; Amazons faltered in mid-stride and deliberately laid down their spears.

The lion was once more sitting down with the lamb.

GODDESSES, FORGIVE ME, WHAT HAVE I *DONE!*

MR. TIBET, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, HAVE I *HURT* YOU!

YES!

I'M SO SORRY, LET ME HELP YOU.

DON'T.

PLEASE.

WELL--

HOLY MARY, WHAT AM I *DOING!*

LORD, FORGIVE ME!

The discord was fading.

--CANNOT APOLOGIZE ENOUGH FOR WHAT HAS OCCURRED. WE CAN NO LONGER STAND AS AMAZONS UNDER THE BANNER OF ARTEMIS. WE MUST--

STAND TOGETHER, MENALIPPE. AND LET HIM WHO IS WITHOUT SIN CAST THE FIRST STONE.

GORBY COULD NOT SAY IT BETTER!

RIGHT ON, REVEREND!

FRIENDS AND SISTERS! MAY WE PLEASE HAVE ORDER FOR JUST A MOMENT.

I THINK IT IS TIME TO THANK OUR PERSONAL CHOICE OF DEITY FOR SEEING US THROUGH THIS CRISIS.

SISTERS! WE HAVE FALLEN UNDER THE SPELL OF THE ANCIENT APPLES OF DISCORD. WE MUST MARSHAL OUR FAITH IN HUMANITY, AND OUR STRENGTH AS AMAZONS...

...AND THROW OFF THE SHACKLES OF ERIS!

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, I SHALL NOT WANT.

SCH'MAI YISROAEL, ADONOI ELEHENU, ADONOI E-CHUD.

NOOOOOOOOOOO!

Nation would not rise against nation again.

It was over.

But Eris was not yet ready to give up.

THEY THINK THEY HAVE DEFEATED ME! BUT I STILL HAVE YOU!

It was an empty boast, for though Eris commanded hatred and jealousy and all the dark sides, Wonder Woman commanded herself...

...and she would not give up that precious commodity again.

ROBERT! ROBERT, LOOK! SHE'S BACK!

WONDER WOMAN'S BACK!

NOOO!

KRACKKKK!!

WOW

ALL RIGHT, DAUGHTER OF ARES--

NOW THE MADNESS WILL END!

TEACH HER A *LESSON*, WONDER WOMAN!

BASH HER HEAD IN!

GET HER!

NO.
THIS IS NOT THE WAY.
RUN, PRINCESS. ESCAPE WHILE YOU CAN.
IN THE END YOU WILL STILL BE MINE!
HANG ON, LOIS. I'LL HAVE YOU OUT OF THERE IN A MINUTE.
NEVER MIND ME.
WHAT ABOUT HER!
REMEMBER THIS, PRINCESS DIANA --
MY APPLES DO NOT CREATE THE SERPENT.
THEY MERELY FEED THE HUNGER OF THE PRIMAL BEAST WHO LIVES WITHIN THE SHADOWED CAVERNS OF EVERY HEART THAT BEATS TO A MORTAL RHYTHM.
INCLUDING YOURS.
FOR EVERY BEAST THERE IS A LAMB, ERIS.
AAAAAHHHHHH
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE APPLE? WHAT'D YOU DO?
NOTHING. ABSOLUTELY NOTHING.
WITHOUT HATRED AND ANGER, THE APPLES HAVE NO SUBSTANCE. IS THAT IT?
YES. EXACTLY.
YOU HAVE TO HELP ME NOW. YOU MUST RELEASE YOUR ANGER, LET GO OF YOUR HATE. IT'S THE ONLY WAY HOME!

PRETTY *WORDS*, PRINCESS. BUT WORDS DO NOT--

ZZZZZZT

MAY THE *FORCE* BE WITH YOU, WONDER WOMAN.

AND ATHENA'S *PROWESS*, TOO.

It was power beyond reason. We were witnessing what humanity had not been meant to witness.

KRAKKK

AGHH

WHOMP

...and I thought to myself, how sad and lonely is the pride of a goddess, how humiliating to fail before those who once feared you.

It was the twilight of a god who did not wish to die. My hatred and anger toward Eris was dispelled...

BOOOOMM

SHRAKKKKKK

RUMMMBLE

PRR

I watched Wonder Woman play Bullets and Bracelets with a goddess' wrath...

...and I did not fear for the Amazon.

But I cried for Eris.

ATHENA, GRANT ME WISDOM.

SHOW ME A WAY WITHOUT MORE DEATH AND DESTRUCTION.

SHEEEEE

THE OLYMPIANS ARE NOT HERE TO ANSWER YOUR PRAYERS, PRINCESS.

THIS TIME YOU STAND ON YOUR OWN, AS ANY FRAIL MORTAL!

SHE IS NOT JUST ANY MORTAL, ERIS--!

AND SHE IS FAR FROM ALONE!

MAY ARTEMIS GUIDE MY AIM...

DIANA! BURN THE TREE DOWN WITH THE FIRE OF TRUTH!

TWANGGG

YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS, HIPPOLYTE!!

GOT...

...IT!

FIRES OF HESTIA! BURN TRUE, AND BURN BRIGHT!

Hestia was the goddess of the home fires, the protector of unity, the defender of familial goodwill.

The Tree of Discord could not stand the heat of her blazing dignity.

HAHAHAHAHAHAHA

HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA

GREAT GAEA! ERIS!

WHAT MADNESS HAS TAKEN HER OVER!

NO, PRINCESS DIANA. YOUR DESTINY LIES ON A DIFFERENT PATH THAN MINE.

I AM BEATEN. PERHAPS FOREVER. PERHAPS NOT. WE ARE ALL CLOTH IN THE SPINNING HANDS OF THE FATES, AND IT IS USELESS TO BEMOAN WHAT AWAITS US ALL.

GOOD-BYE, PRINCESS. YOU ARE TRULY THE CHOSEN ONE OF OLYMPUS, A MAGNIFICENT WONDER OF A MORTAL WOMAN.

AHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAAA

BOOOM!

DIANA!

Her shout is a queen's order, imperious and demanding.

It almost hides the whisper of a mother's pleading fear within it.

And Wonder Woman answers as a princess, though her smile is that of a daughter.

ERIS IS GONE, MAJESTY!

The Goddess of Discord was defeated...

...and, with her passing, the strange spell that had overtaken us all dispersed.

There was much shuffling of feet, and embarrassed murmurs of apology.

For the ugliness of humanity had risen to the surface. Could we rise above all that had happened?

NO, LOIS.

YOU BEAT HER, PRINCESS.

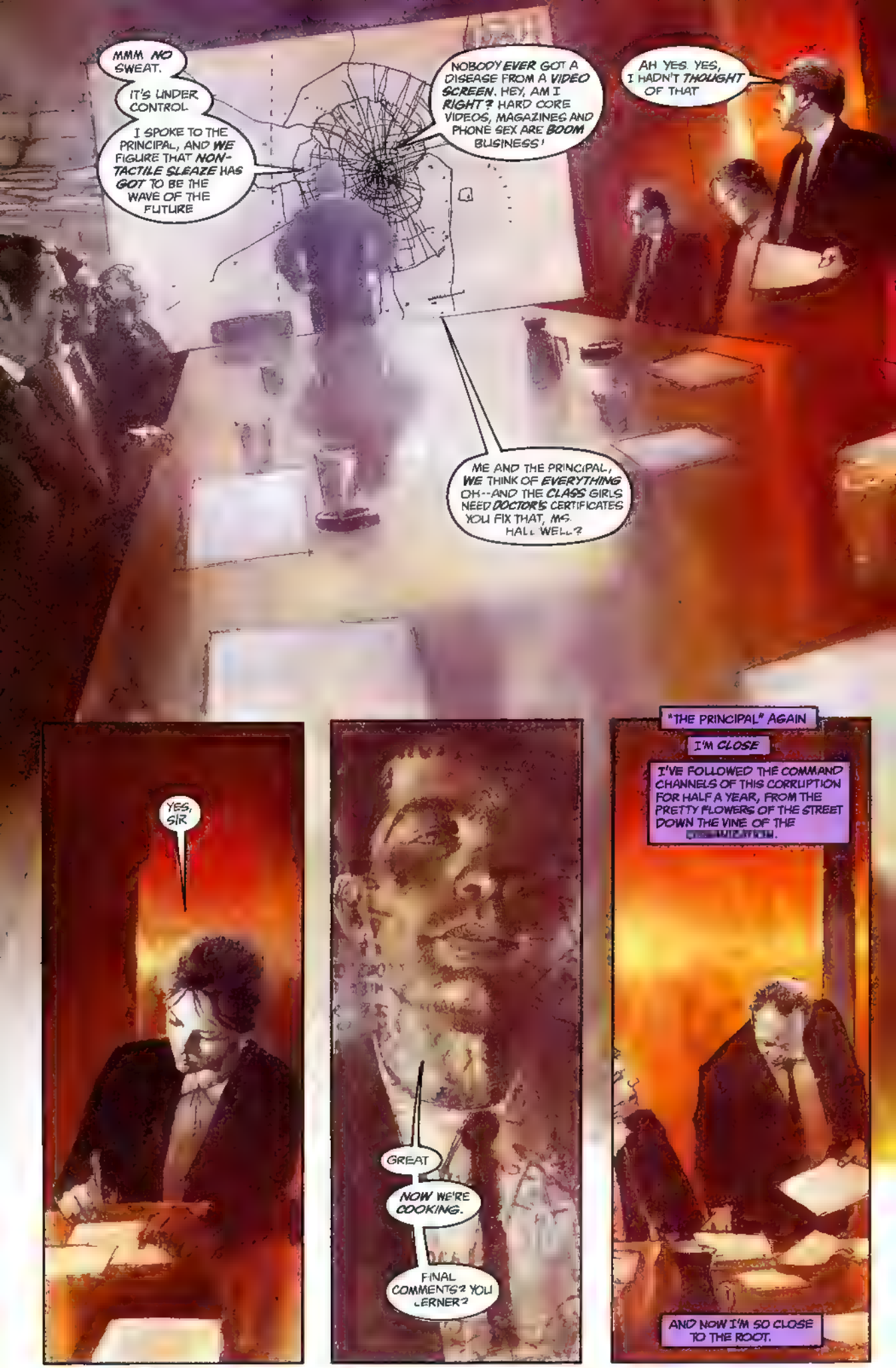
WE ALL BEAT HER.

There was a true sense of history in the crowd. And perhaps that is what drives us. The sense of tomorrow.

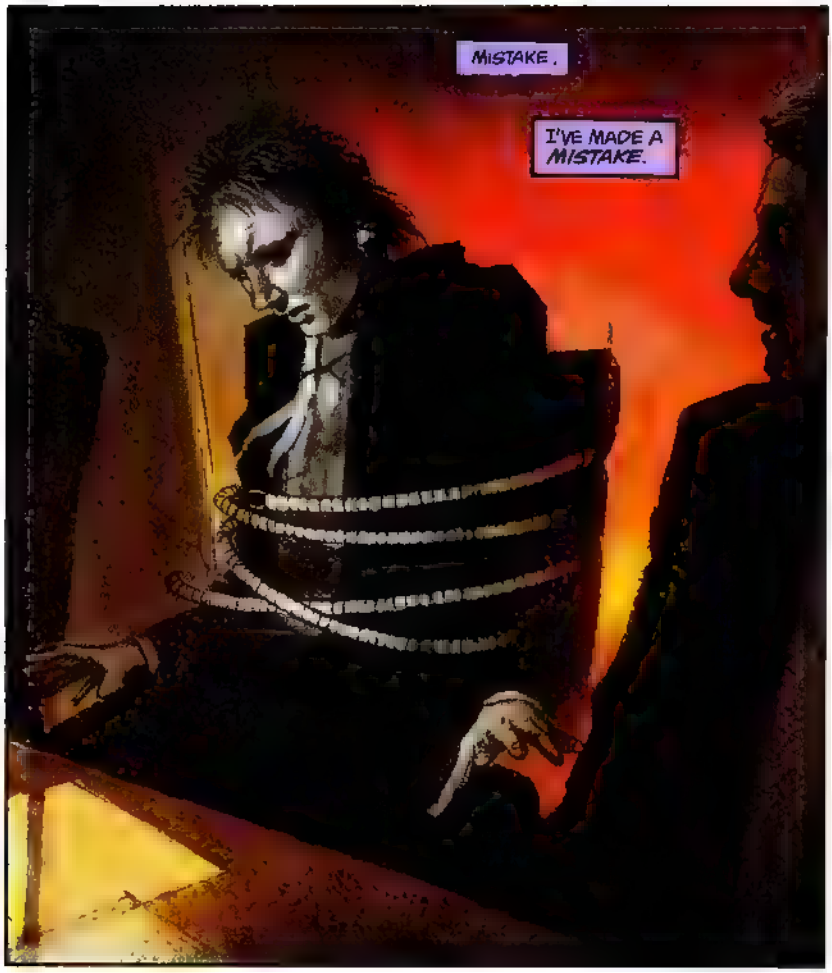
In Prague, in Berlin, in Warsaw, and in Themyscira, it is tomorrow that holds out its promise to us.

The promise of peace.

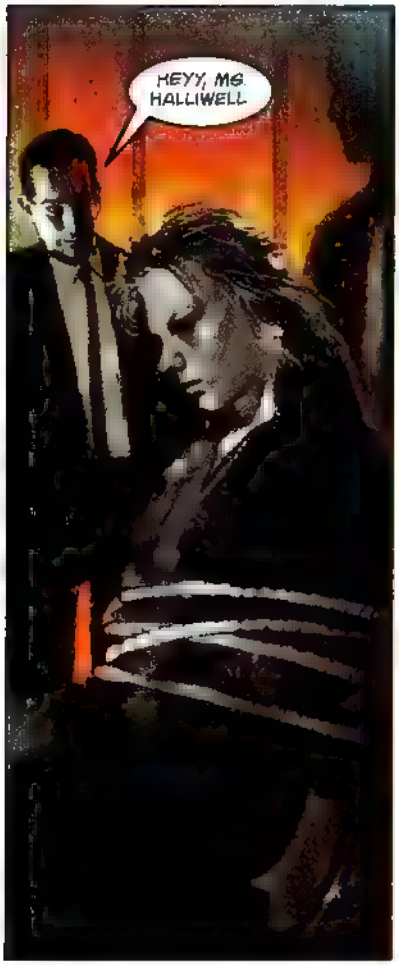
WINTER IS COMING
I FEEL IT IN THE WARM AUTUMNAL AIR
I SCENT IT AT SUNSET.
I WANT TO SEE THE COLORS OF THE LEAVES BEFORE THEY FALL, TO CARESS THE UPDRAFTS OF THE WIND WITH MY FORM
INSTEAD I'M HERE AMONG THE DEAD THINGS, MARVELING THAT THE WORST OF CRIMES CAN BECOME...
...SO TEDIOUS
I WILL BE GLAD WHEN THIS IS OVER
...THING IS CERTAIN, MR CHAIRMAN, PROFITS THIS YEAR'LL BE UP 60% MINIMUM
MAJOR GROWTH AREAS ARE STILL DRUGS AND COMPUTER CRIME.
THE DEPARTMENT DOES HAVE SOME ATTENTION ON PROSTITUTION, WHICH AS WE HEARD FROM MS. HALLIWELL EARLIER, HAS BEEN HARD HIT BY THE AIDS SCARE


MMM. NO SWEAT.
IT'S UNDER CONTROL.
I SPOKE TO THE PRINCIPAL, AND WE FIGURE THAT NON-TACTILE SLEAZE HAS GOT TO BE THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE
NOBODY EVER GOT A DISEASE FROM A VIDEO SCREEN. HEY, AM I RIGHT? HARD CORE VIDEOS, MAGAZINES AND PHONE SEX ARE BOOM BUSINESS!
AH YES. YES, I HADN'T THOUGHT OF THAT
ME AND THE PRINCIPAL, WE THINK OF EVERYTHING OH--AND THE CLASS GIRLS NEED DOCTOR'S CERTIFICATES YOU FIX THAT, MS. HALL WELL?
YES, SIR
GREAT
NOW WE'RE COOKING.
FINAL COMMENTS? YOU LERNER?
"THE PRINCIPAL" AGAIN
I'M CLOSE
I'VE FOLLOWED THE COMMAND CHANNELS OF THIS CORRUPTION FOR HALF A YEAR, FROM THE PRETTY FLOWERS OF THE STREET DOWN THE VINE OF THE [redacted].
AND NOW I'M SO CLOSE TO THE ROOT.

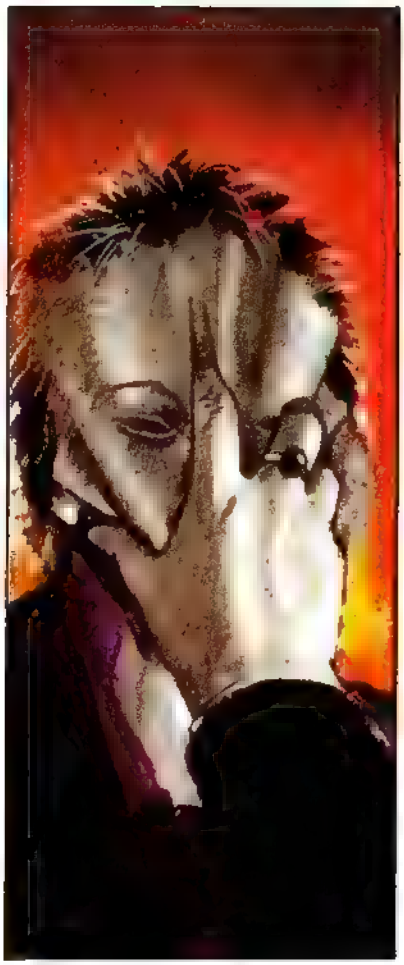
SO CLOSE...
..PAYOFFS TO THE POLICE ARE APPROACHING THE MAXIMUM SET ASIDES. I PROPOSE WE UP THE BASIC WEEKLY SLUSH FUND ANOTHER F.FTY GRAND, WITH AN EXTRA HUNDRED THOU FOR RESERVES
UH-HUH. I'D NEED A FULL PROPOSAL, WITH EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWNS.
YES, SIR
I THOUGHT IT WAS YOU, BUT I WAS WRONG. YOU'RE A FRONT. A COVER FOR THE BIG MAN
THE PRINCIPAL. THE HEART OF THE ROT.
FABULOUS. WELL, THAT CONCLUDES THIS MONTH'S BUSINESS. YOU'RE ALL DOING A GREAT JOB Y'KNOW? TERRIFIC.
I REALLY MEAN IT
KEEP IT UP, HUH?
YES, SIR
YES, MR CHAIRMAN
UH-HUH
YESSIR
- OHH, I NEARLY FORGOT!
BEFORE YOU ALL TAKE OFF, THERE IS STILL ONE TINY MATTER WE HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF


MISTAKE.
I'VE MADE A MISTAKE.

HI, GUYS GLAD YOU COULD MAKE IT...


HEYY, MS. HALLIWELL

YOU'RE LOOKING SO GOOD, LADY
LET'S SEE IF WE CAN MAKE YOU LOOK BETTER, HUH?

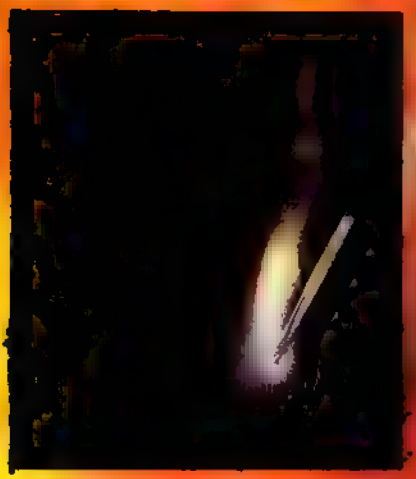


OH, NICE VERRY PRETTY
YOU GOT ONE OF THOSE COSTUMES UNDER THERE TOO?
OHHH YESSS PRETTY IN PURPLE!
LADIES AN' GENTLEMEN -- TA-DAA! -- IT'S THE BLACK ORCHID! YAYYY!
OK! SHOW'S OVER, TEAM
OVERCONFIDENT ALL THESE YEARS, AND I HAVE BECOME COMPLACENT
I WAS SO CLOSE. I WILL NOT GET ANGRY I MUST NOT ALLOW MYSELF THAT
I'LL BE IN TOUCH
GET OUT FAST
WHAT ARE THESE CORDS? STEEL? TITANIUM? HIGH-TECH TOUGH ..

MMM... WHAT DID YOU DO TO THE REAL EMMA HALLIWELL? I'VE BEEN WONDERING... IS THERE A REAL EMMA HALLIWELL?
NO, IT'S OKAY, DON'T TELL ME. I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU SUPER-PEOPLE LIKE YOUR LITTLE SECRETS
HEY... YOU KNOW SOMETHING? I'VE SEEN, Y'KNOW, THE MOVIES, JAMES BOND, ALL THAT I'VE READ THE COMICS.
SO YOU KNOW WHAT I'M NOT GONNA DO? I'M NOT GOING TO LOCK YOU UP IN THE BASEMENT BEFORE INTERROGATING YOU
I'M NOT GOING TO SET UP SOME KIND OF COMPLICATED LASER BEAM DEATHTRAP, THEN LEAVE YOU ALONE TO ESCAPE
THAT STUFF IS SO DUMB
BUT YOU KNOW WHAT I AM GOING TO DO?
I'M GOING TO KILL YOU NOW
OK, BRAD GO FOR IT
OUR DATA FILES ON YOU ARE PRETTY THIN ON HARD FACTS. BUT THEY DO CLAIM YOU'VE GOT SOME KIND OF BULLET PROOF BODY... WELL, THAT'S COOL.
YEAH SO... LET'S CHANGE THE SUBJECT LET'S TALK ABOUT FIRE YOU LIKE FIRE, MS ORCHID?

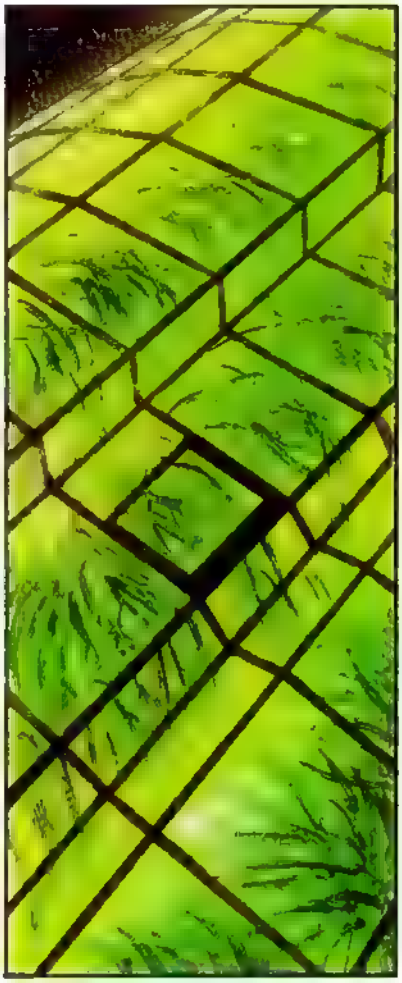
HEYY... TALK TO ME WE'RE TALKING FLAMES AND BURNING HERE
OK, GUYS THAT'S FINE YEAH, POUR IT ON HER, TOO
ALL OVER MMM, THAT'S FINE
YOU SUPER-PEOPLE LIVE IN A WORLD OF CLICHÉS, LADY
YOU SHOULDA WISED UP-- THESE ARE THE EIGHTIES! FIGHTING CRIME IS LIKE FIGHTING CITY HALL; IT'S COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE!
AWWW... IS THAT THE TIME? GOT TO GO. BUT, HEY, MAYBE WE CAN DO LUNCH SOMETIME? NO? WELL, GOODNIGHT, LADY
GOODNIGHT, SWEET LADY
IT WAS FUN
OH, AND MR. HALLIWELL...

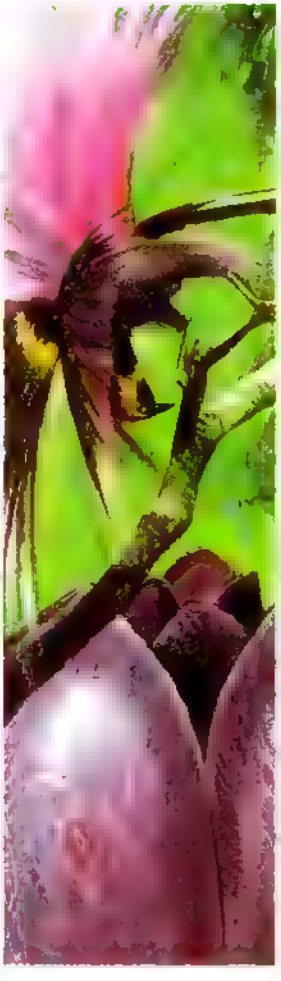
YOU'RE FIRED.

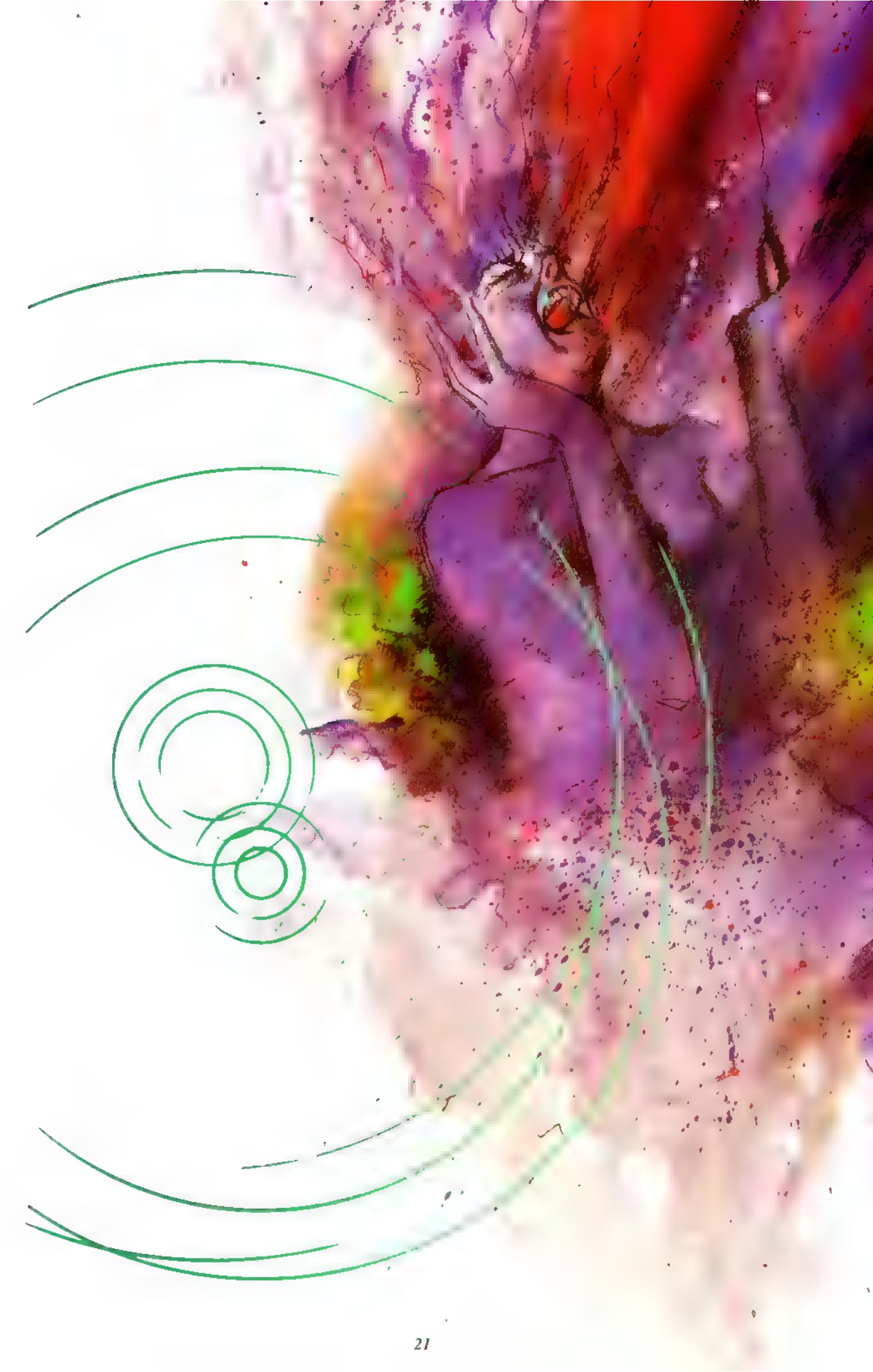


HOT
CAN INCREASE DENSITY, BUT ONLY DELAY BURNING...
MUST BREAK...
IN AIR...
YES...
UHH
HOT..
SO HOT...
WINDOW...
CAN MAKE IT TO THE WINDOW...
IF I KEEP GOING I CAN MAKE IT TO THE WINDOW.
I WOULD SING IN THE TWILIGHT...

I WILL SING TO YOU AGAIN
MY SIS··



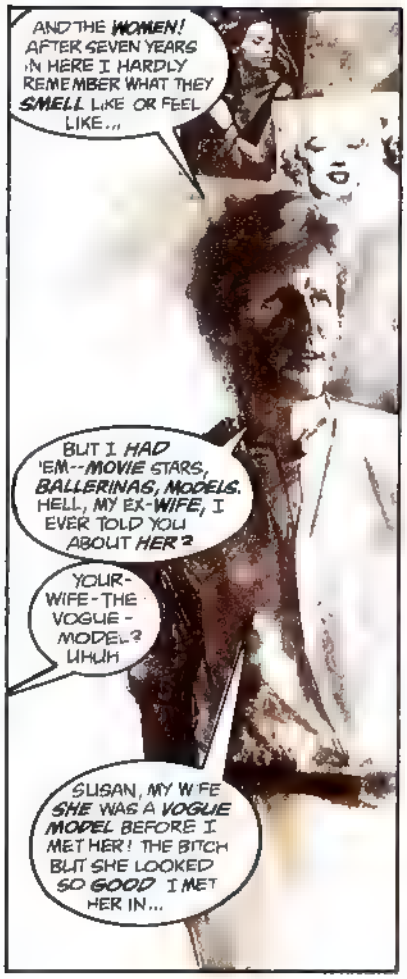




I MEAN, ONE THING IS CERTAIN!
THIS TIME TOMORROW, EVERYTHING'S GONNA BE JUST GREAT AGAIN! LIKE IT USED TO BE!

DID I EVER TELL YOU WHAT IT WAS LIKE?
UH-HUH MEBBE A THOUSAND TIMES
I WAS--I COULD GO PLACES. I WAS HIS RIGHT-HAND MAN ARMAMENTS-- LISTEN, YOU WANT ANYTHING WHEN YOU GET OUT, I MEAN ANYTHING--
HANDGUN, RIFLE, TANK, I C B FRIGGIN' M MISSILE-- YOU COME AND SEE ME AN' I'LL GET IT FOR YOU, HUH?

I'M GOIN' STRAIGHT WHEN I GET OUT, MAN
I HAD A PORSCHE, I HAD A ROLLS, I HAD A CADILLAC LIMO WITH A FRIGGIN' JACUZZI IN THE BACK!
I HAD A PLACE IN BEVERLY HILLS, AND A PENTHOUSE IN MANHATTAN, AND A TOWNHOUSE IN METROPOLIS HEIGHTS! YOU EVER BEEN TO METROPOLIS HEIGHTS?
I TOL' YOU I NEVER

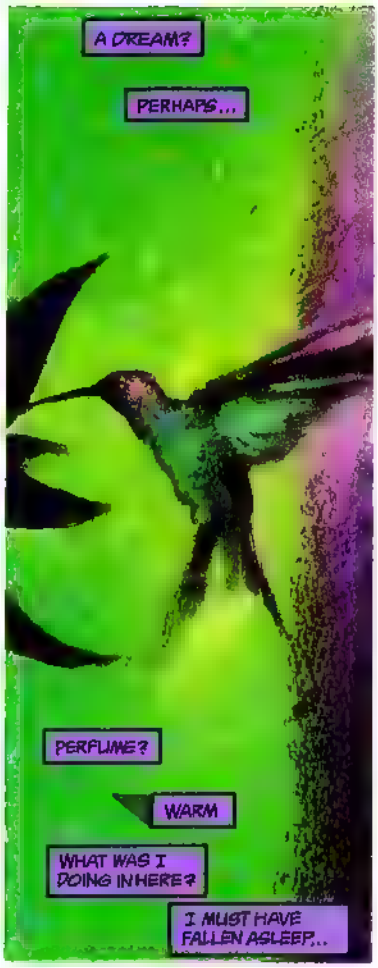

AND THE WOMEN! AFTER SEVEN YEARS IN HERE I HARDLY REMEMBER WHAT THEY SMELL LIKE OR FEEL LIKE...
BUT I HAD 'EM--MOVIE STARS, BALLERINAS, MODELS. HELL, MY EX-WIFE, I EVER TOLD YOU ABOUT HER?
YOUR-WIFE-THE VOGUE-MODEL? UHUH
SUSAN, MY WIFE SHE WAS A VOGUE MODEL BEFORE I MET HER! THE BITCH BUT SHE LOOKED SO GOOD I MET HER IN...

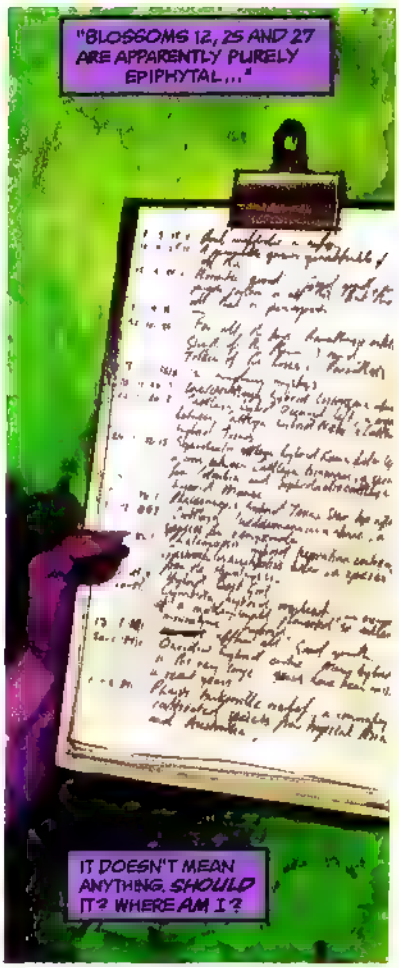
VEGAS.
...LAS VEGAS. THE BITCH BITCH. BITCH. I, UH...THE BOSS YOU KNOW THE BIG BOSS YOU. JUST WATCH--
THIS EVENING, WHEN THEY LET ME OUT, HE'LL HAVE A LIMO OUT THERE WAITING FOR ME BY TOMORROW I'LL BE HIS NUMBER ONE ARMS MAN AGAIN

I SOLD ARMS TO EVERYBODY-- KINGS, PRESIDENTS, CIA, KGB I'LL BE THAT BIG AGAIN THE BOSS LEFT ME HERE TILL THE HEAT WAS OFF HE HAD TO. BUT HE NEEDS ME! YOU'LL SEE GOT A SMOKE?
YUP

THANKS, MAN I TELL YOU, WHEN I'M OUT OF HERE, YOU NAME IT AND I'LL SEND IT IN TO YOU CAVIAR, CIGARS, COKE
JUST TWO HOURS.
YOU JUST TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT YOU GOT A LIGHT?
BARS
HUH?
WHAT I WANT. I MISS JUS' HANGIN' AROUN' IN BARS. YOU DO THAT FOR ME? GO TO SOME BAR, HAVE A BEER OR TWO, SOME PRETZELS. TALK TO THE BARTENDER YOU DO THAT?
UH.. SURE SURE PAL
THAT'S WHAT I MISS IN JAIL
THE BARS
THERE'S SOMETHING MISSING.

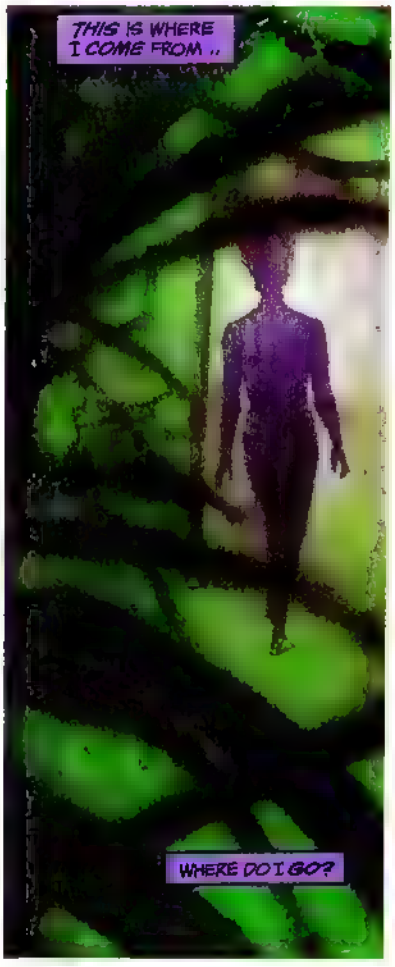
THIS IS THE GARDEN, STILL AND GREEN.
THERE IS A HUMMING SOMEWHERE.
SOMEONE WAS BURNING.
SOMEONE HAS GONE.
I FELT IT.


A DREAM?
PERHAPS...
PERFUME?
WARM
WHAT WAS I DOING IN HERE?
I MUST HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP...

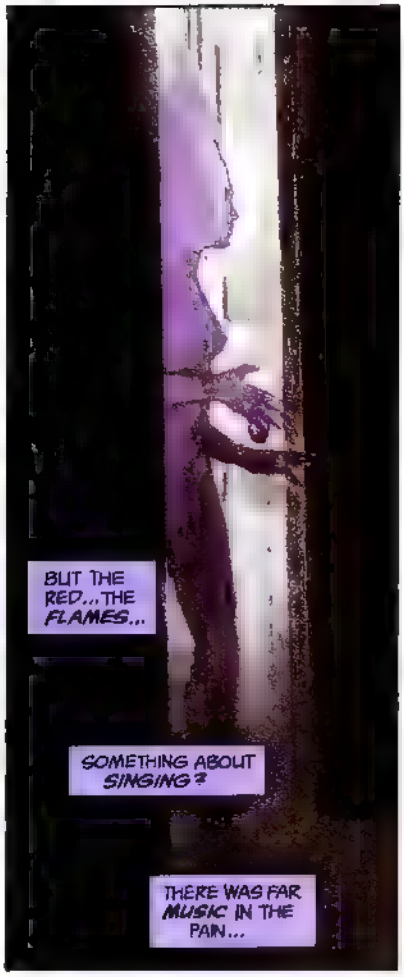

"BLOSSOMS 12, 25 AND 27 ARE APPARENTLY PURELY EPIPHYTAL..."
IT DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING. SHOULD IT? WHERE AM I?

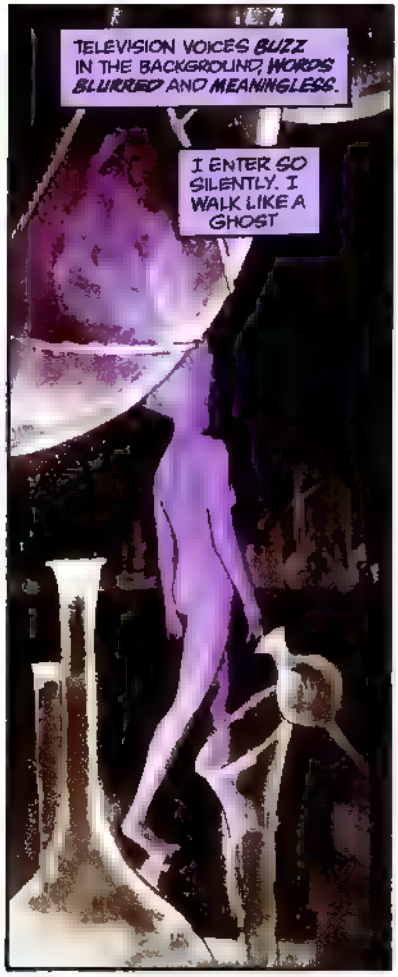
SOMETHING'S MISSING...

FLOWERS. HALF STARE FROM COOL, FAMILIAR FACES. A SLOW DEEP PLACE, THE GARDEN.


THIS IS WHERE I COME FROM..
WHERE DO I GO?

COOLER OUT HERE
IT WASN'T TIME TO AWAKE
I DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE THE GREEN DREAM UNTIL THE END...


BUT THE RED... THE FLAMES...
SOMETHING ABOUT SINGING?
THERE WAS FAR MUSIC IN THE PAIN...


TELEVISION VOICES BUZZ IN THE BACKGROUND, WORDS BLURRED AND MEANINGLESS.
I ENTER SO SILENTLY. I WALK LIKE A GHOST

POOR LOST THING...
IT HURTS...

I MOVE TOWARD THE SOURCE OF THE SOUND
I KNOW HIM
(I DON'T KNOW HIM.)
NO, I DO KNOW HIM... SOMEHOW...
AND I KNOW WHAT'S MISSING
AN IDENTITY
MINE.

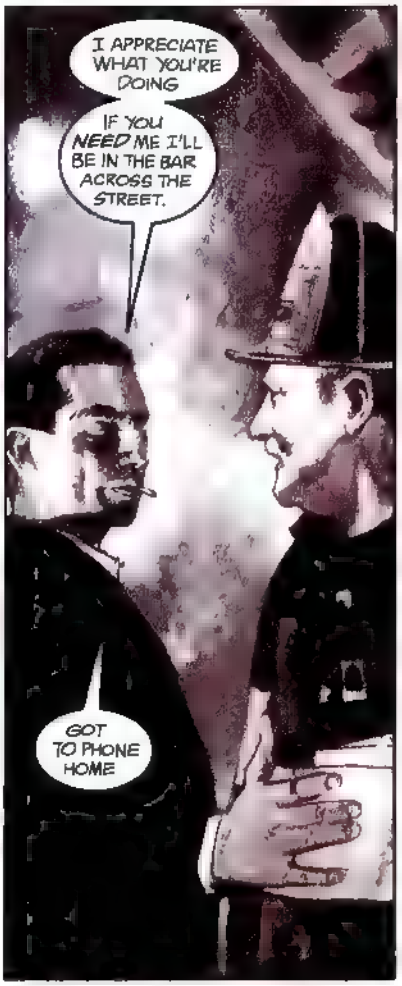
WHO AM I?
UH
... WHO ARE YOU? YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW? THAT'S STRANGE...

"THE OTHER ONE KNEW IMMEDIATELY"

YOUR TEAM WAS VERY PROMPT, CAPTAIN I'M IMPRESSED NO, REALLY I'M PERSONALLY GOING TO MAKE SURE THE MAYOR HEARS ABOUT THIS!
THANK YOU, MR. STERLING. WE'VE GOT A BACKUP FIRE TRUCK COMING DOWN FROM METROPOLIS AS WELL... SHOULD BE ANOTHER FIFTEEN MINUTES MAYBE ..

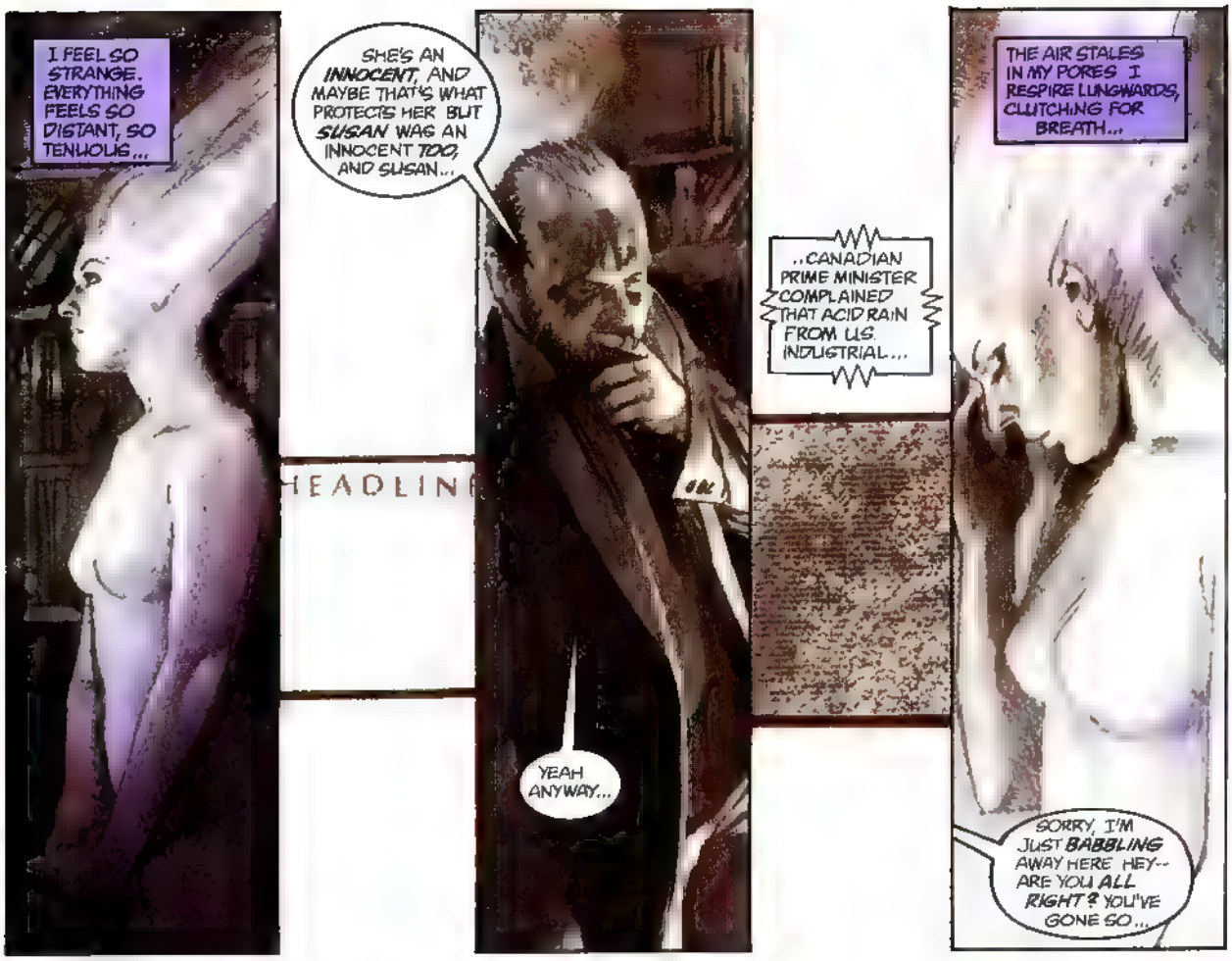
ANY IDEA WHAT STARTED IT?
TOO SOON TO SAY, MR STERLING

THIS IS FOR YOU AND YOUR MEN, CHIEF


I APPRECIATE WHAT YOU'RE DOING
IF YOU NEED ME I'LL BE IN THE BAR ACROSS THE STREET.
GOT TO PHONE HOME

AND...UH... DON'T PUT IT OUT TOO FAST KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING?
WHAT? OH... YEAH RIGHT FOR CERTAIN

WE CAN'T BE CERTAIN ABOUT ANYTHING DAMN -- I WISH SHE WAS HOME SHE'D KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING AND SHE COULD EXPLAIN ALL THE OTHER STUFF TO YOU
UH... DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?
PHIL DOCTOR PHILIP SYLVIAN. RING ANY BELLS?
I DON'T THINK SO. YOUR FACE IS FAMILIAR...
BELLS...? N-NO...
P.TY
I WISH I COULD TELL YOU WHEN SHE'LL BE BACK, BUT SHE'S KIND OF MYSTERIOUS. Y'KNOW, UNPREDICTABLE SOMETIMES SHE'S GONE FOR WEEKS... SHE COMES BACK EVENTUALLY. HER COMPUTERS ARE HERE AND SHE LIKES TO SEE YOU PEOPLE...
HEY
YOU, THE OTHER BLOSSOMS... SHE'S OUT THERE FOR HOURS. MAINLY SHE, UH, WELL, SHE SINGS...
OH
SINGING. AN ECHO FROM THE GREEN DREAM... A VOICE... "SISTERS?" I CLUTCH AT THE IMAGE, BUT IT ELUDES ME.
NOW, WORLD NEWS, FROM GALAXY BROADCASTING, DIRECT FROM METROPOLIS...
FIRST FEW YEARS I USED TO WORRY ABOUT HER PRAY SHE WOULDN'T GET INTO SOMETHING TOO DEEP, TOO BIG FOR HER TO HANDLE...
HEH
SHE NEVER DID, YOU SUPER-PEOPLE, YOU'RE INDESTRUCTIBLE. GOOD GUYS ALWAYS WIN. YOU CAN READ ABOUT IT IN THE MORNING PAPERS...

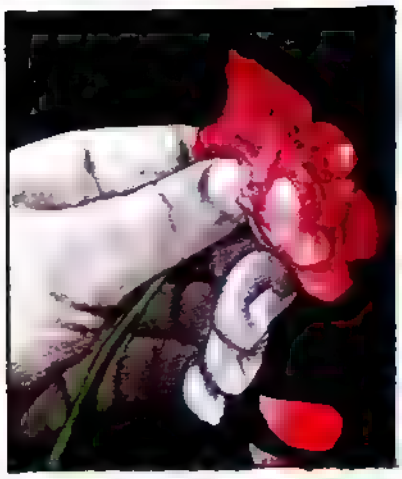

I FEEL SO STRANGE. EVERYTHING FEELS SO DISTANT, SO TENUOUS...
SHE'S AN *INNOCENT*, AND MAYBE THAT'S WHAT PROTECTS HER BUT *SUSAN* WAS AN INNOCENT *TOO*, AND SUSAN...
HEADLINE
YEAH ANYWAY...
...CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER COMPLAINED THAT ACID RAIN FROM U.S. INDUSTRIAL...
THE AIR STALES IN MY PORES I RESPIRE LUNGWARDS, CLUTCHING FOR BREATH...
SORRY, I'M JUST *BABBLING* AWAY HERE HEY-- ARE YOU *ALL RIGHT?* YOU'VE GONE SO...

...AND THAT'S THE END OF THE WORLD NEWS
...PALE?
NO I'M NOT ALL RIGHT AT ALL...
OCAL NEWS
...WHAT AM I...?

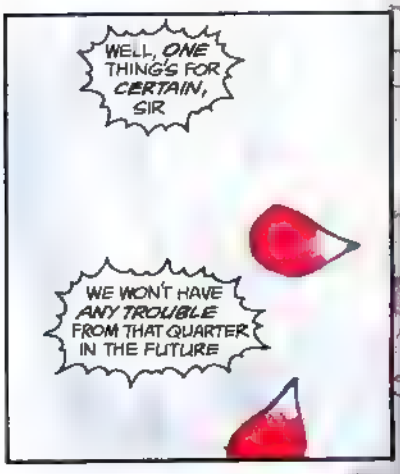
RAGES IN A DOWNTOWN OFFICE BUILDING EVEN AS I SPEAK
FILM TAKEN BY AN AMATEUR CAMERAMAN SHOWS AT LEAST ONE WOMAN LOST HER LIFE IN THE BLAZING INFERNO...
AMATEUR VIDE
OH GOD
TH THAT'S ALL I N-NEED...

THAT ALL YOU NEED, SIR?

I'D LIKE TO USE YOUR PHONE, IF I MAY
SURE THING PHONE'S OVER THERE
HELLO, SIR
AH, MR CHAIRMAN YOU HAVE NEWS FOR ME...?
YES, SIR YOU WERE RIGHT ON ALL COUNTS
I DO NOT DOUBT IT. IT WAS HALLIWELL?
YEEESS ,,OR RATHER IT WASN'T, IF YOU SEE WHAT I MEAN
VERY DROLL AND SHE HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY DISPOSED OF² IN THE MANNER I SUGGESTED²
OH, SURE. I TOOK CARE OF IT PERSONALLY.
HEH,, "NO FLOWERS BY REQUEST"!,

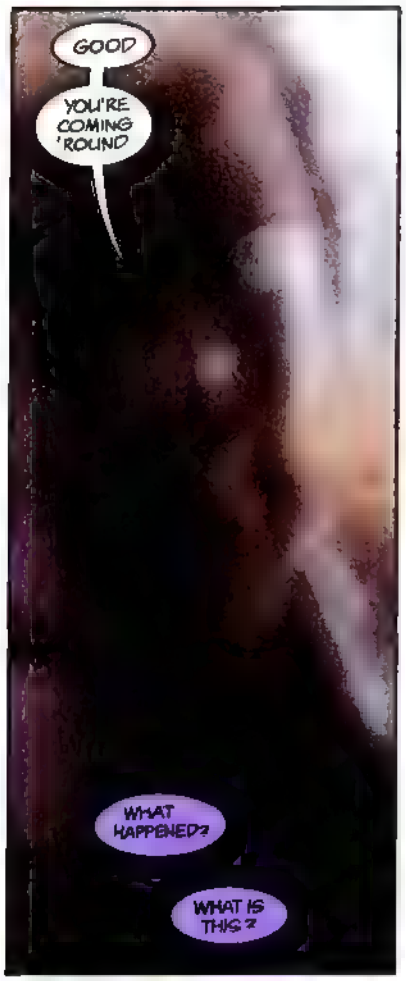


I DON'T *LIKE* THESE SUPER-PEOPLE, MISTER CHAIRMAN. ONE *LESS* IS GOOD NEWS. KEEP ME INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS


WELL, *ONE* THING'S FOR *CERTAIN*, SIR
WE WON'T HAVE *ANY TROUBLE* FROM THAT QUARTER IN THE FUTURE

GOOD.

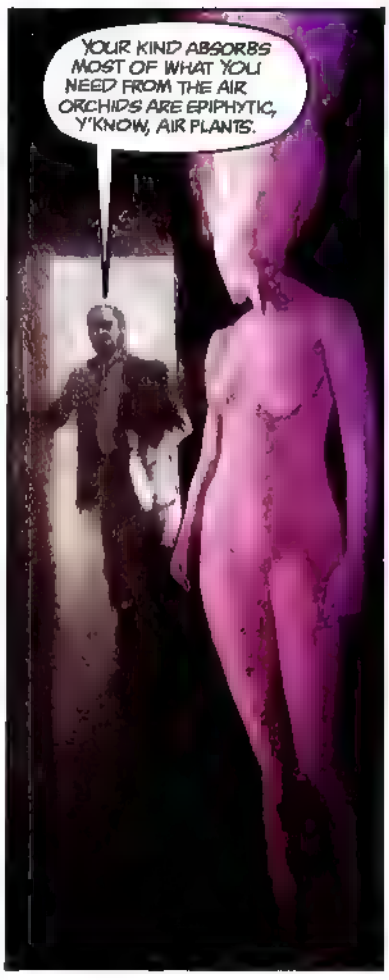
YES... VERY GOOD.
LEX LUTHOR

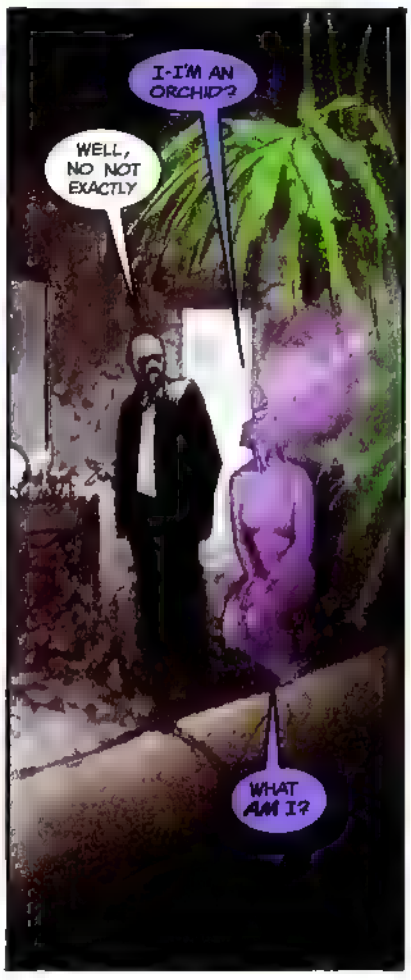

GOOD
YOU'RE COMING 'ROUND
WHAT HAPPENED?
WHAT IS THIS?

YOU'RE IN THE BATH

YOU SEE, BEING MOBILE, YOU'RE USING MORE WATER, MORE CARBON DIOXIDE THAN YOU WOULD IF YOU WERE STILL ROOTED.

IT'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT
IT'S JUST YOUR METABOLISM SPEEDING UP.
DEPLETED RESERVE


YOUR KIND ABSORBS MOST OF WHAT YOU NEED FROM THE AIR ORCHIDS ARE EPIPHYTIC, Y'KNOW, AIR PLANTS.


I-I'M AN ORCHID?
WELL, NO NOT EXACTLY
WHAT AM I?

YOU ARE . UH...
YOU WERE . YOU USED TO BE...
I MEAN, YOU WEREN'T, BUT..

SORRY
THE WORDS JUST DON'T WORK FOR IT IF I TELL YOU THE WHOLE STORY, MAYBE YOU'LL REMEMBER BITS OF IT AS I GO ALONG SHE DID
OKAY. I'LL START AT THE BEGINNING WITH SUSAN

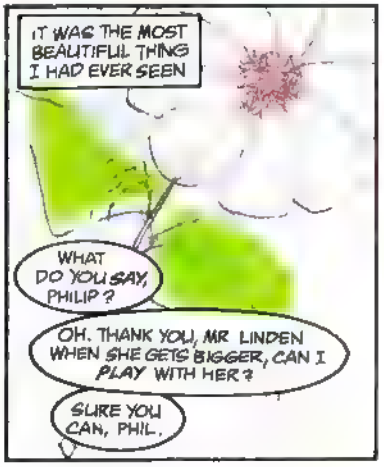
THE FIRST THING I REMEMBER ABOUT HER IS THE FIRST THING I CAN REMEMBER APPROPRIATE, REALLY. SHE'D'VE BEEN FLATTERED
I WAS THREE WHEN MR LINDEN, OUR NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR, CAME OVER I WAS OUTSIDE ON THE PORCH, WATCHING A BUG CLIMB UP A ROSE BUSH

HARRY?
HARRY-- YOU THERE?

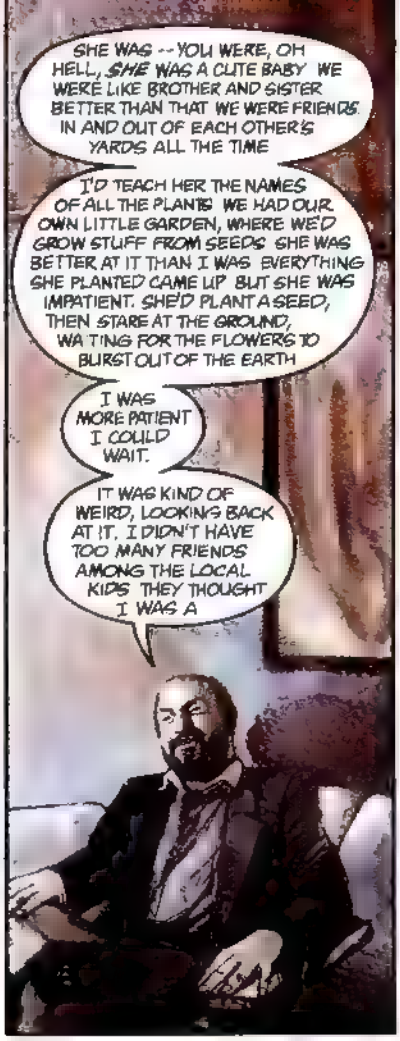
HELLO, JARRET WELL..?
IT'S A GIRL! HARRY, I'M A FATHER! IT'S A GIRL! HEY NOW, WHERE DID I PUT THEM...?

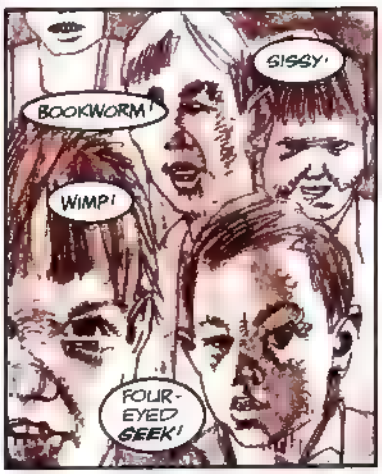
HERE--HAVE A CIGAR!
TAKE TWO G'WAN!
CONGRATULATIONS, JARRET WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO CALL HER?
WELL, JOYCE WANTS TO CALL HER MELINDA. I LIKE SUSAN, THOUGH AFTER MY MOTHER WE'LL SEE

WHADDA YOU THINK THEN, PHILLY? A BABY GIRL. YOU WANNA CIGAR? HEH HEH
UH, NO THANK YOU, MR LINDEN
I GOTTA GIVE YOU SOMETHING UM... HERE.

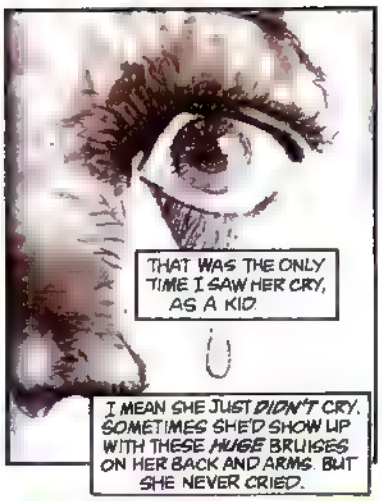

IT WAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THING I HAD EVER SEEN
WHAT DO YOU SAY, PHILIP?
OH. THANK YOU, MR LINDEN WHEN SHE GETS BIGGER, CAN I PLAY WITH HER?
SURE YOU CAN, PHIL.

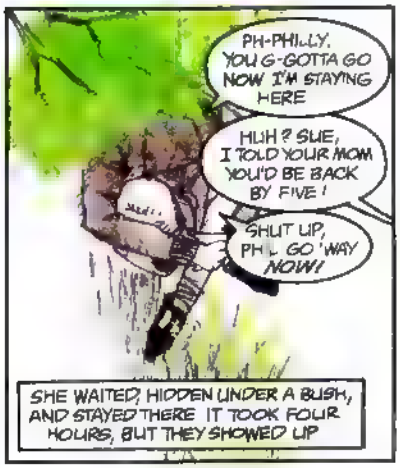
YOU CAN PLAY WITH MY LITTLE PRINCESS..

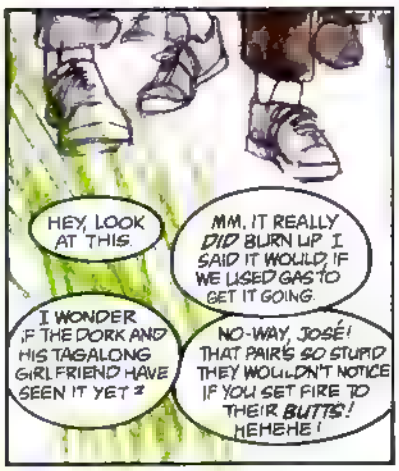

SHE WAS -- YOU WERE, OH HELL, SHE WAS A CUTE BABY WE WERE LIKE BROTHER AND SISTER BETTER THAN THAT WE WERE FRIENDS IN AND OUT OF EACH OTHER'S YARDS ALL THE TIME
I'D TEACH HER THE NAMES OF ALL THE PLANTS WE HAD OUR OWN LITTLE GARDEN, WHERE WE'D GROW STUFF FROM SEEDS SHE WAS BETTER AT IT THAN I WAS EVERYTHING SHE PLANTED CAME UP BUT SHE WAS IMPATIENT. SHE'D PLANT A SEED, THEN STARE AT THE GROUND, WAITING FOR THE FLOWERS TO BURST OUT OF THE EARTH
I WAS MORE PATIENT I COULD WAIT.
IT WAS KIND OF WEIRD, LOOKING BACK AT IT. I DIDN'T HAVE TOO MANY FRIENDS AMONG THE LOCAL KIDS THEY THOUGHT I WAS A

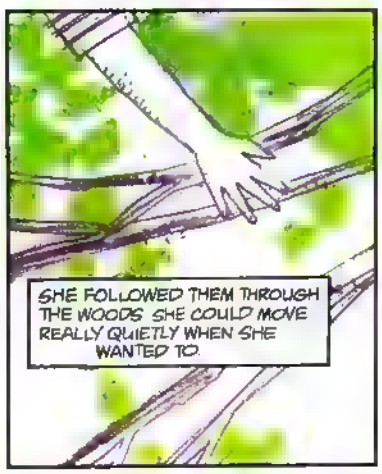

SISSY!
BOOKWORM!
WIMP!
FOUR-EYED GEEK!

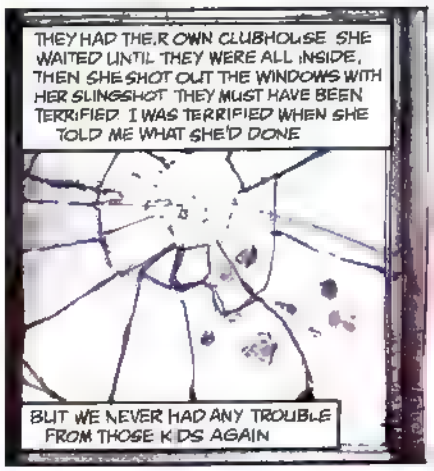
SO I WAS HAPPY WITH YOU SORRY WITH HER
WE BUILT A FORT INSIDE A HOLLOW TREE THAT HAD BLOWN OVER IN A STORM SHE WAS SIX, I WAS TEN
THEN ONE DAY WE WENT DOWN THERE, AND SOMEONE HAD SET FIRE TO IT ALL THAT WAS LEFT WAS TH E CHARRED STUMP


THAT WAS THE ONLY TIME I SAW HER CRY, AS A KID
I MEAN SHE JUST DIDN'T CRY. SOMETIMES SHE'D SHOW UP WITH THESE HUGE BRUISES ON HER BACK AND ARMS. BUT SHE NEVER CRIED.

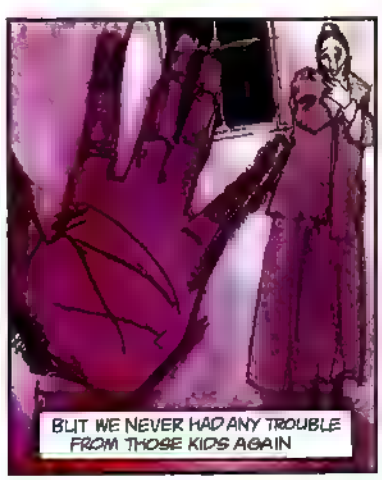

PH-PHILLY, YOU G-GOTTA GO NOW I'M STAYING HERE
HUH? SUE, I TOLD YOUR MOM YOU'D BE BACK BY FIVE!
SHUT UP, PHIL GO 'WAY NOW!
SHE WAITED, HIDDEN UNDER A BUSH, AND STAYED THERE IT TOOK FOUR HOURS, BUT THEY SHOWED UP


HEY, LOOK AT THIS
MM, IT REALLY DID BURN UP I SAID IT WOULD IF WE USED GAS TO GET IT GOING
I WONDER IF THE DORK AND HIS TAGALONG GIRLFRIEND HAVE SEEN IT YET?
NO-WAY, JOSÉ! THAT PAIR'S SO STUPID THEY WOULDN'T NOTICE IF YOU SET FIRE TO THEIR BUTTS! HEHEHE!


SHE FOLLOWED THEM THROUGH THE WOODS SHE COULD MOVE REALLY QUIETLY WHEN SHE WANTED TO.

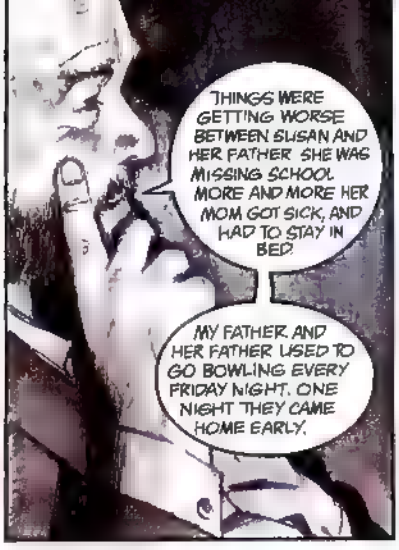

THEY HAD THEIR OWN CLUBHOUSE SHE WAITED UNTIL THEY WERE ALL INSIDE, THEN SHE SHOT OUT THE WINDOWS WITH HER SLINGSHOT THEY MUST HAVE BEEN TERRIFIED I WAS TERRIFIED WHEN SHE TOLD ME WHAT SHE'D DONE
BUT WE NEVER HAD ANY TROUBLE FROM THOSE KIDS AGAIN

THAT WAS PART OF WHAT SHE WAS ABOUT MR. LINDEN, HER FATHER, MUST HAVE BEEN REALLY MAD AT HER SHE WASN'T ALLOWED OUT FOR A WEEK AFTER THAT

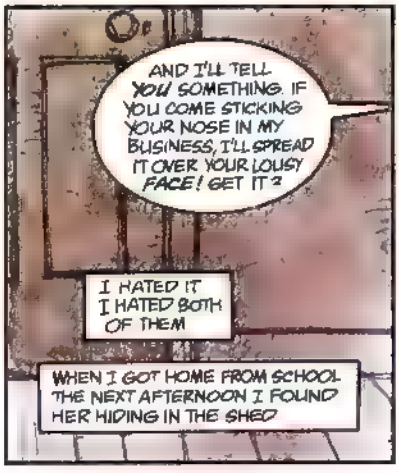

BUT WE NEVER HAD ANY TROUBLE FROM THOSE KIDS AGAIN

MY MOTHER DIED WHEN I WAS TWELVE I PUT POPPIES ON HER GRAVE. I'D GROWN THEM MYSELF

MY DAD GAVE ME A SHED AT THE BACK OF THE GARDEN I MADE IT MY LABORATORY I'D MESS AROUND WITH CHEMISTRY SETS TRY TO DISCOVER PENICILLIN

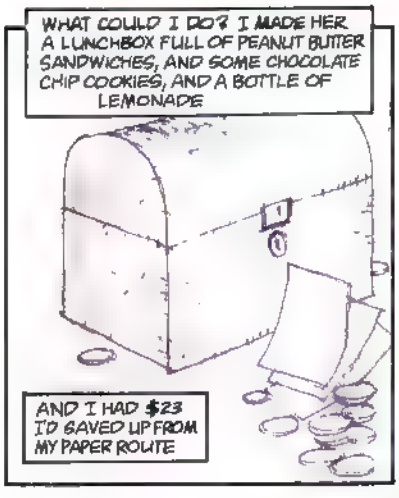

THINGS WERE GETTING WORSE BETWEEN SUSAN AND HER FATHER SHE WAS MISSING SCHOOL MORE AND MORE HER MOM GOT SICK, AND HAD TO STAY IN BED
MY FATHER AND HER FATHER USED TO GO BOWLING EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT. ONE NIGHT THEY CAME HOME EARLY.

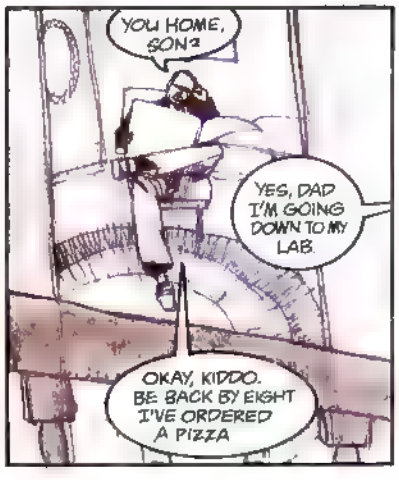
I TELL YOU SOMETHING FOR NOTHING YOU ARE SICK!
OH YEAH, MISTER HOLIER-THAN-THOU, WELL YOU KEEP YOUR GODDAMN OPINIONS TO YOUR SELF!


AND I'LL TELL YOU SOMETHING. IF YOU COME STICKING YOUR NOSE IN MY BUSINESS, I'LL SPREAD IT OVER YOUR LOUSY FACE! GET IT?
I HATED IT I HATED BOTH OF THEM
WHEN I GOT HOME FROM SCHOOL THE NEXT AFTERNOON I FOUND HER HIDING IN THE SHED

SUSAN? WHAT ARE YOU..?
SSHH PHIL .. CAN YOU GET ME SOMETHING TO EAT? PLEASE I'M RUNNING AWAY AND I'M HUNGRY
YOU'RE CRAZY

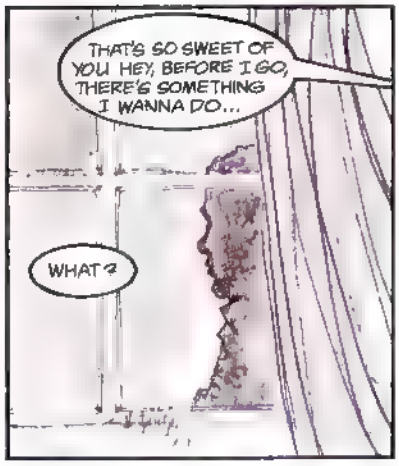
UH-UH I GOTTA PLEASE HONEY? PHIL? PUHLEASE?


WHAT COULD I DO? I MADE HER A LUNCHBOX FULL OF PEANUT BUTTER SANDWICHES, AND SOME CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES, AND A BOTTLE OF LEMONADE
AND I HAD $23 I'D SAVED UP FROM MY PAPER ROUTE


YOU HOME, SON?
YES, DAD I'M GOING DOWN TO MY LAB.
OKAY, KIDDO. BE BACK BY EIGHT I'VE ORDERED A PIZZA

YOU WERE HIDING UNDER THE TABLE WHEN I GOT BACK
HERE GOT YOU SOME FOOD
OH, PHILLY! YOU'RE INCREDIBLE! COOKIES AND PEANUT BUTTER SANDWICHES AND, HUH? HEY, MONEY!! YOU CAN'T AFFORD THIS!

YOU NEED IT. UH, IT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR


THAT'S SO SWEET OF YOU. HEY, BEFORE I GO, THERE'S SOMETHING I WANNA DO...
WHAT?

HOLD STILL
THIS

NOBODY HAD EVER KISSED ME LIKE THAT BEFORE. IT WAS STRANGE, Y'KNOW, I, UH, I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS SUPPOSED TO DO WITH MY TONGUE, OR WHETHER I WAS SUPPOSED TO SUCK OR BLOW OR WHAT... THAT SOUNDS SORTA STUPID DOESN'T IT?

I SUPPOSE IT MUST HAVE BEEN HER FIRST TIME TOO, BUT SHE KISSED LIKE SHE KNEW ALL ABOUT IT. I THOUGHT, "GIRLS ARE DIFFERENT." I THOUGHT, "SHE REALLY LOVES ME!" I COULD SMELL HER HAIR, AND THE NIGHT, AND THE LILACS...

SO THAT'S WHAT YOU DO DOWN HERE, HUH? SLUT!

BITCH WHORE CHEAP BITCH--

NO! DADDY DADDY, GOD, NO...

CRAZY SLUT! YOU'RE KILLING YOUR MOTHER! KILLING HER!

AND YOU KID WIMPO. IF YOU EVER LAY A FINGER ON MY DAUGHTER AGAIN I'LL KILL YOU..

I THINK HE MEANT IT, TOO.

OUR HOUSES WERE NEXT DOOR. I HEARD HER SCREAMING THAT NIGHT. I HEARD HIM HITTING HER. I COULDN'T MAKE OUT ALL THE WORDS, BUT HE WAS CALLING HER TH NGS. HORRIBLE TH NGS..

NEXT DAY SHE WAS GONE. I THOUGHT HE'D KILLED HER, BUT THEN I SAW THAT THE LUNCHBOX AND THE MONEY HAD GONE TOO. AND I JUST KEPT MY FINGERS CROSSED AND PRAYED THAT WHEREVER SHE WAS, NO ONE WAS GO NG TO HURT HER.

Hi, Phil
It's me. The sandwiches were great. I'm okay. Really. Europe is okay, but I miss you
XXX XXXXX

Philip Sulivan
2109 Post Road E
Bakerline
Metropolis
11605 USA

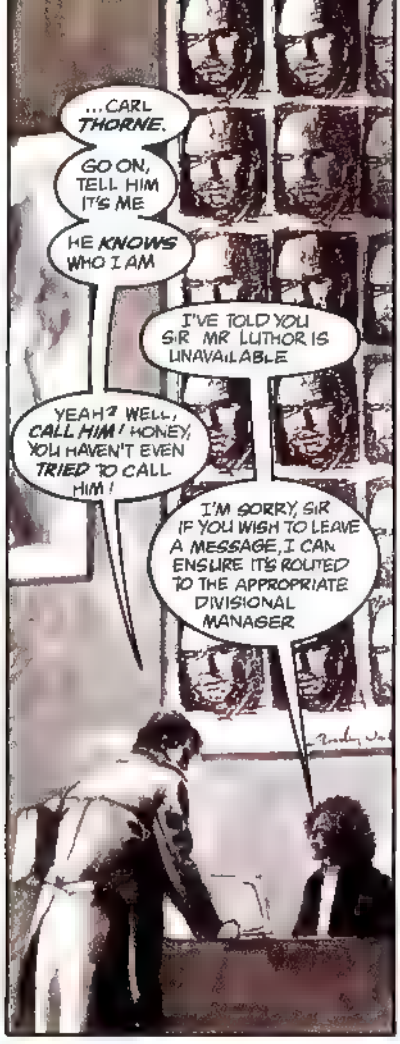
A COUPLE OF MONTHS LATER I GET A CARD. IT WAS FROM AMSTERDAM, IN HOLLAND. IT DIDN'T SAY MUCH, JUST THAT SHE WAS DOING FINE.

I PUT THE CARD WITH THE FLOWER, FROM HER HAIR, NSIDE ONE OF MY SCHOOL BOOKS

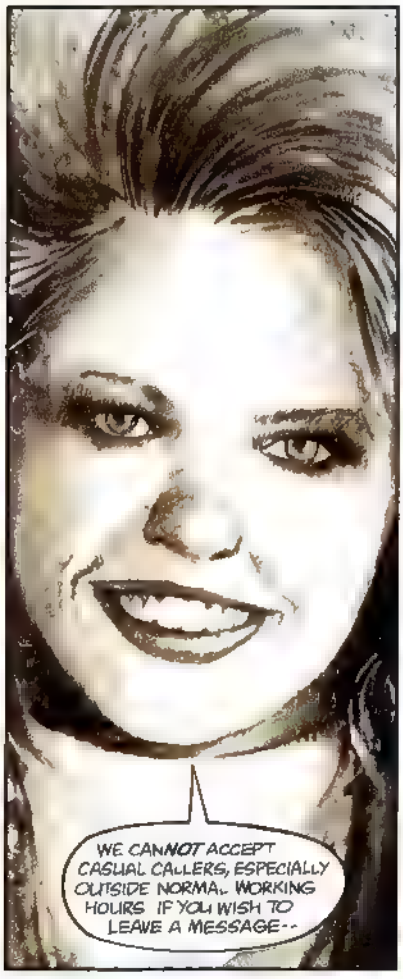
I GOT ANOTHER CARD ABOUT SIX MONTHS LATER FROM HAMBURG, IN GERMANY. THEN NOTHING.

I DIDN'T SEE HER AGAIN UNTIL I WAS IN COLLEGE. THEN AGAIN, A WH LE LATER, WHEN SHE MARRIED CARL. THAT WAS HER HUSBAND'S NAME.

CARL THORNE


...CARL THORNE.
GO ON, TELL HIM IT'S ME
HE KNOWS WHO I AM
I'VE TOLD YOU SIR MR LUTHOR IS UNAVAILABLE
YEAH? WELL, CALL HIM! HONEY, YOU HAVEN'T EVEN TRIED TO CALL HIM!
I'M SORRY, SIR IF YOU WISH TO LEAVE A MESSAGE, I CAN ENSURE IT'S ROUTED TO THE APPROPRIATE DIVISIONAL MANAGER

NO, NO, LOOK, SUGAR, WATCH MY LIPS! MY NAME IS CARL THORNE I WANT TO SEE LEX LUTHOR. HE'LL SEE ME!


WE CANNOT ACCEPT CASUAL CALLERS, ESPECIALLY OUTSIDE NORMAL WORKING HOURS IF YOU WISH TO LEAVE A MESSAGE--

I--I, UH, LOOK, I'M NOT MOVING FROM HERE UNTIL I SEE HIM I'M SORRY, SWEETHEART I KNOW YOU'RE UNDER ORDERS
BUT I WARN YOU, HONEY, YOU'RE GOING TO BE IN BIG TROUBLE WHEN LEX FINDS YOU'VE SCREWED ME AROUND LIKE THIS..

IF YOU'D LIKE TO VACATE THE PREMISES NOW, SIR...
GODDAMN IT, DON'T ANY OF YOU TOUCH ME OR I'LL, I'LL
MISS ARDEN, I'LL BE READY TO LEAVE IN TWO MINUTES. HAVE A MERCEDES WAITING

LEX! IT'S ME--CARL THORNE!

I'M OUT, AND THESE GOONS WON'T LET ME SEE YOU! TELL 'EM WHO I AM, FOR CHRISSAKES!
I'M SORRY ABOUT THIS, SIR IT'S ALL UNDER CONTROL SECUR--
ENOUGH, MISS ARDEN
CARL THORNE, EH?
SHOW HIM UP
AND MISS ARDEN... I MAY BE SLIGHTLY DELAYED
LET THE OPERA HOUSE KNOW I WOULD RATHER THE CURTAIN DID NOT GO UP UNTIL I ARRIVE
OF COURSE, SIR
UH.. LEX..
MR LUTHOR.
CARL! COME IN, COME IN! SIT DOWN! CIGAR?
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME! WHAT IS IT, FIVE, SIX YEARS?
SEVEN I'M SORRY TO JUST, WELL, I SHOULD'VE MADE AN APPOINTMENT, BUT I, UH..
DON'T BE FOOLISH, CARL YOU JUST GOT OUT OF JAIL, YOUR NATURAL REACTION IS TO COME AND SEE YOUR OLD BOSS, FIND OUT IF I'VE GOT WORK FOR YOU RIGHT?
YOU GOT IT, BOSS
OH, CARL... INTELLIGENCE NEVER WAS YOUR STRONG POINT, WAS IT?
HUH? NOW LEX, I--
MR LUTHOR CARL
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I'D EMPLOY YOU?
WHAT? NOW WAIT A MINUTE, YOU SAID, WHEN I WENT UP, YOU SAID...
PRISON HASN'T BEEN KIND TO YOU, CARL WHERE ARE THE GOOD LOOKS, THE BOYISH CHARM?

I JUST NEED A LITTLE TIME, MR LUTHOR
TIME? YOU'VE DONE SEVEN YEARS HEHH
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PLO SHIPMENT, CARL?
I TOLD YOU AT THE TIME, SIR, I DON'T KNOW WHA--
I KNOW WHAT YOU TOLD ME, CARL
BUT MR LUTHOR, I NEED A JOB I HAVEN'T GOT ANYTHING, I-I --
60
YOU CHEATED ME, CARL AND YOUR STUPIDITY OVER YOUR EX-WIFE COULD HAVE LOST ME THE WHOLE OF MY ARMAMENTS DIVISION
YOU WERE NOTHING, CARL
I TOOK YOU AND BUILT YOU UP INTO SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL
60
YOU FAILED ME
I DON'T MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE TWICE, THORNE, AND FAILURE DISGUSTS ME
THE SECURITY GUARDS WILL SEE YOU OUT
DON'T COME BACK
59

I SUPPOSE THAT'S WHAT GROWING UP IS ALL ABOUT ACCEPTING THAT THEY WON'T BE COMING BACK..
I'M SORRY

SUSAN LINDEN. HER STORY TOUCHES ECHOES IN ME BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND...
ARE YOU MY FATHER?

YES
YES, I SUPPOSE I AM...
IN A WAY

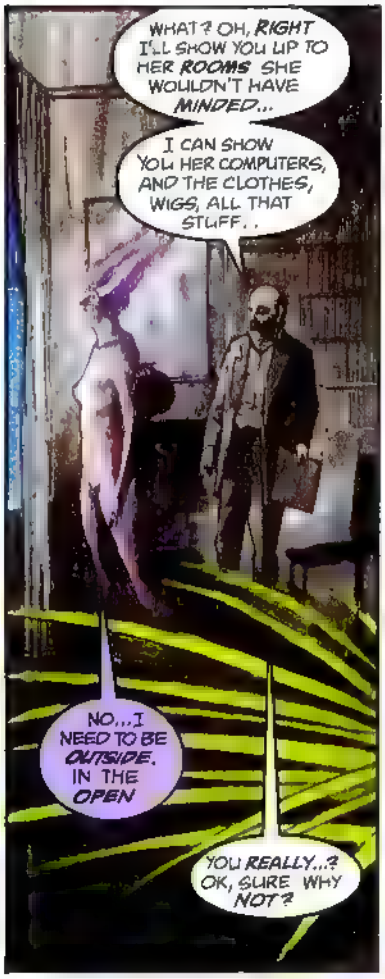
IT'S NOT JUST ME, THOUGH I MEAN, I COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT THE OTHERS. IT GOES BACK TO COLLEGE

ALEC AND I USED TO TALK ABOUT IT LATE INTO THE NIGHT...

THESE WERE THE GUYS

DR JASON WOODRUE, MY OLD BOTANY PROFESSOR
WENT TO IVY UNIVERSITY SHORTLY AFTER THE PICTURE WAS TAKEN LAST I HEARD HE WAS IN ARKHAM INSANE ASYLUM ..POOR OLD GUY...
PAMELA ISLEY I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO HER?
SHE WAS WEIRD REAL SMART, BUT ONE SECOND SHE'D BE SO SWEET, THE NEXT SHE'D BE POISON...
THAT'S ALEC HOLLAND, WITH HIS FIANCÉE, LINDA
SHE THOUGHT I WAS WASTING MY TIME, BUT ALEC KNEW.
GREAT GUY
HE WAS MURDERED, YEARS AGO.
ALEC..
DAMMIT
WHY IS IT THAT ALL THE PEOPLE YOU REALLY CARE ABOUT GET KILLED?
ALEC KNEW WHAT THE SCENE WAS. IT'S FORTY YEARS AT THE MOST BEFORE WE START EXHAUSTING THE OXYGEN...

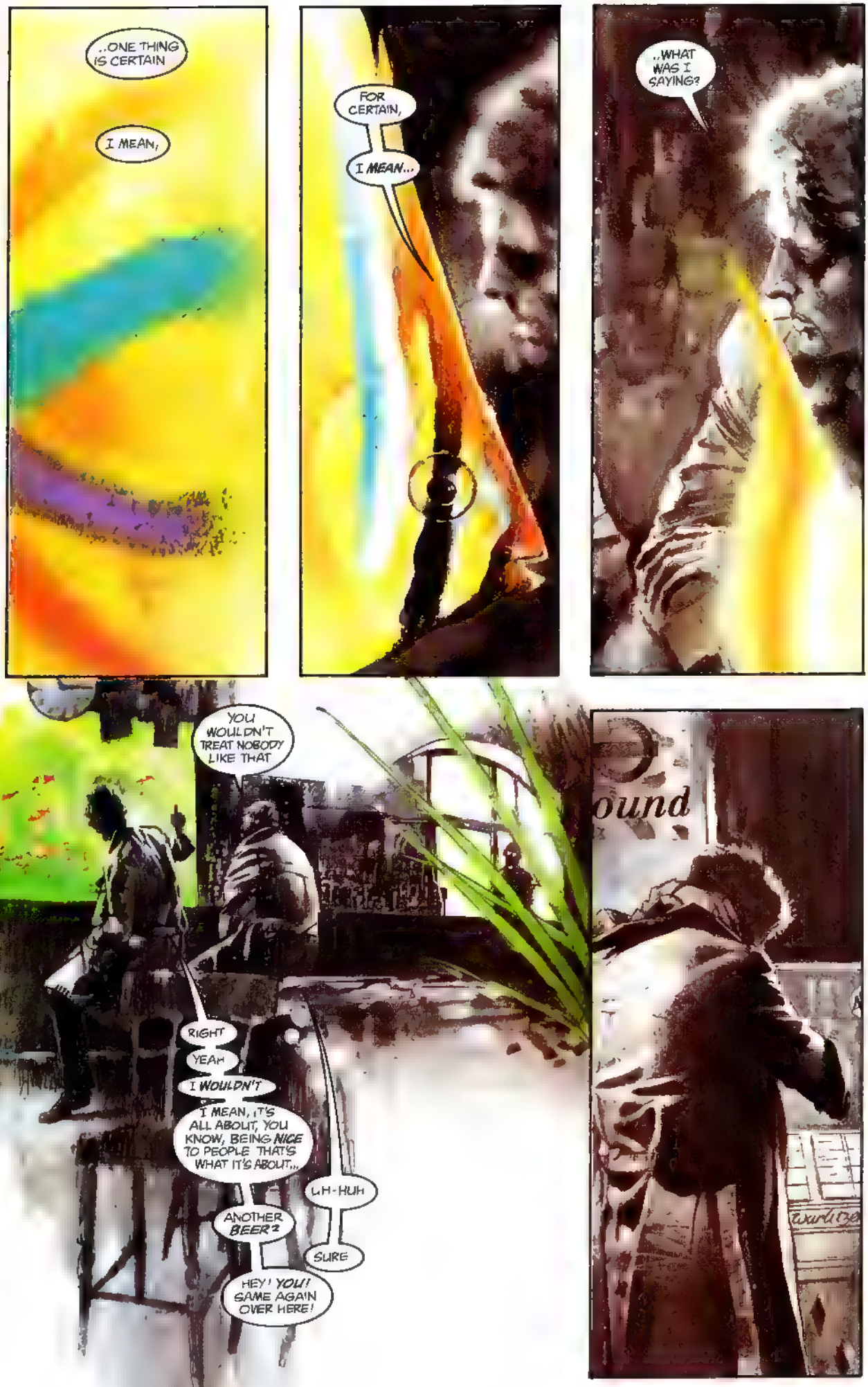
MMM. I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING WEIRD. IF I'M YOUR FATHER, THEN SUSAN...WELL, SUSAN WOULD BE YOUR, UH...
I FEEL... TIRED I ..THINK I SHOULD SLEEP NOW


WHAT? OH, RIGHT I'LL SHOW YOU UP TO HER ROOMS SHE WOULDN'T HAVE MINDED...
I CAN SHOW YOU HER COMPUTERS, AND THE CLOTHES, WIGS, ALL THAT STUFF..
NO...I NEED TO BE OUTSIDE. IN THE OPEN
YOU REALLY...? OK, SURE WHY NOT?

GOODNIGHT

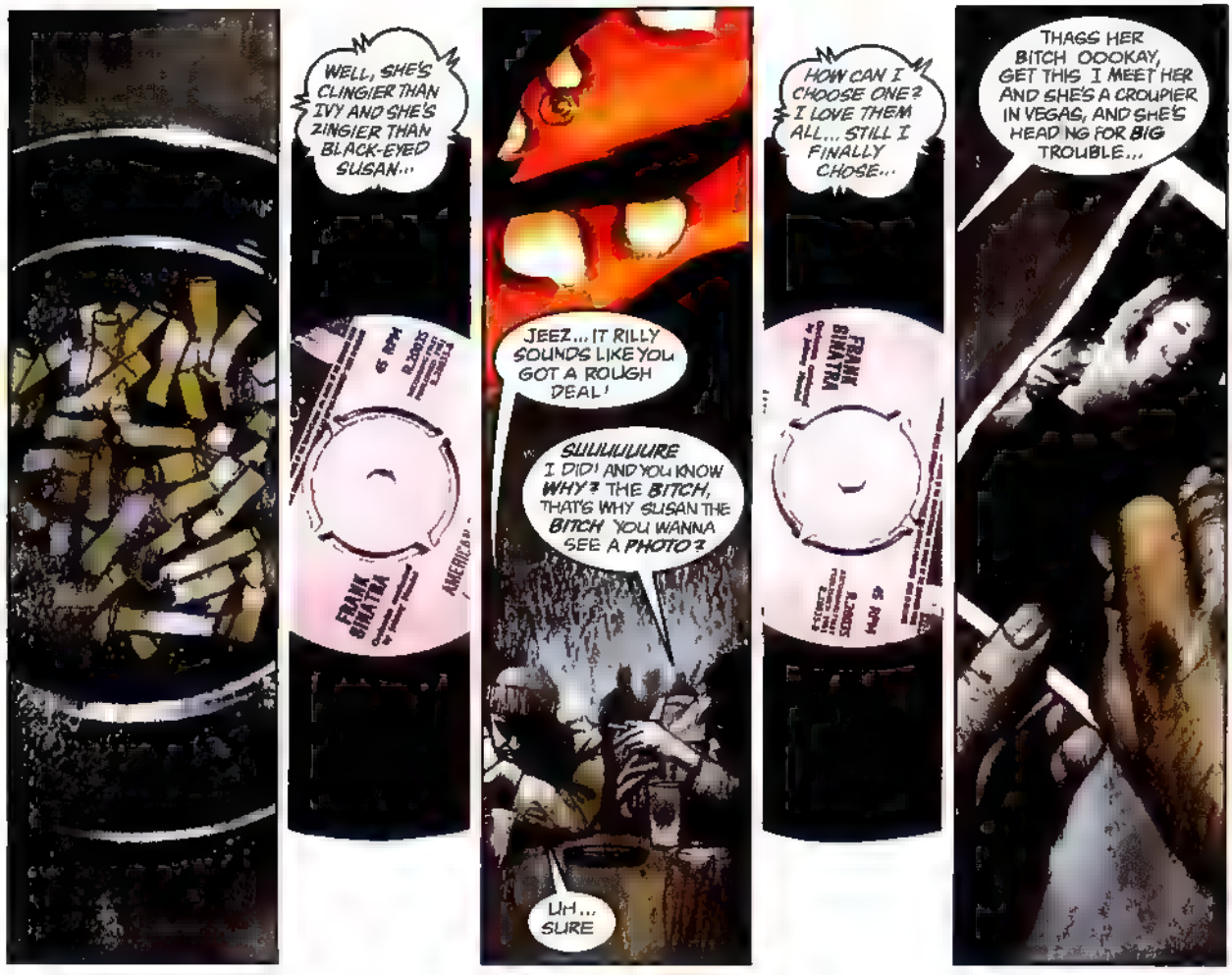
DON'T STAY AWAY TOO LONG

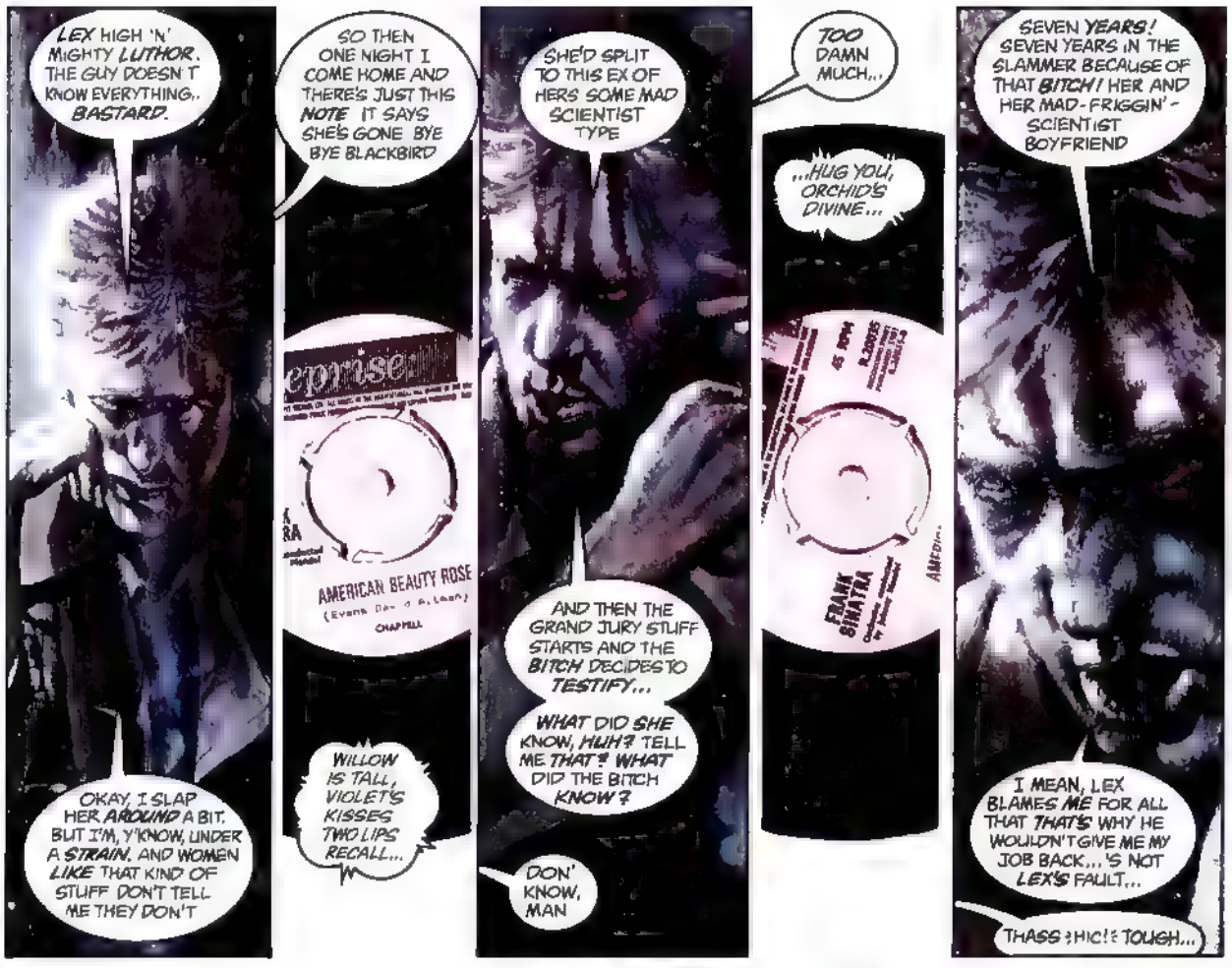
THE GREEN DREAM IS OVER THIS IS SOMEWHERE NEW...
THE FOOD IS GOOD HERE PLENTY OF FLOUR AND FLIES NOW WE GET A CAB BACK TO MY PLACE.
NOT AGAIN, PHIL REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU AND SUSAN, THE LAST TIME YOU DID THIS?
SUSAN, THIS IS THE LAST TIME..
ONE WAY
DOES THAT MEAN I HAVE TO FORGET WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?
TAXI!
YUP--TIME FLIES!
YOU CAN'T THEY LEAVE AT IRREGULAR INTERVALS
NOW, FIRST YOU ASK ME TO MARRY YOU, THEN HE SAYS...
I SAY, "THIS IS THE END OF THE LINE GET OUT BOTH OF YOU!"
I KNEW I SHOULD HAVE FLOWN!
NO SMOKING
NO EATING OR DRINKING IN THIS CAR
NO U TURN PERMITTED
SUSAN... YOU CAN'T FLY!
OH ARE YOU SURE?
QUITE CERTAIN LIFE FLIES AND YOU'RE DEAD


..ONE THING IS CERTAIN
I MEAN,
FOR CERTAIN,
I MEAN...
..WHAT WAS I SAYING?
YOU WOULDN'T TREAT NOBODY LIKE THAT
RIGHT
YEAH
I WOULDN'T
I MEAN, IT'S ALL ABOUT, YOU KNOW, BEING NICE TO PEOPLE THAT'S WHAT IT'S ABOUT...
UH-HUH
ANOTHER BEER?
SURE
HEY! YOU! SAME AGAIN OVER HERE!
ound
wardrobe

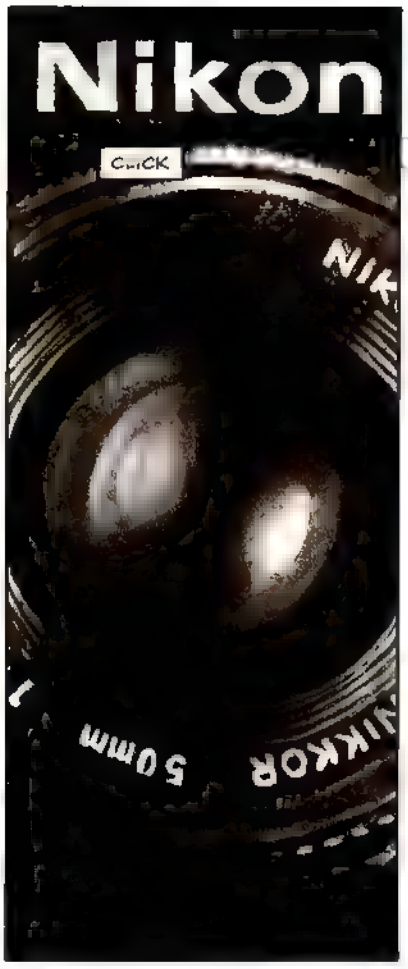
DAISY IS DARLING, IRIS IS SWEET, LILY IS LOVELY-- BLOSSOM'S A TREAT...
reprise
AMERICAN BEAUTY ROSE
CHAPPELL
THAT'S GOOD. SINATRA THAT'S REAL MUSIC HE'S NOT DEAD OR ANYTHING, IS HE?
NOPE I DON'T THINK SO...
DAMN RIGHT. THANK GOD THERE'S SOMETHING IN THIS SCUMMY WORLD YOU CAN RELY ON!
WELL I FINALLY CHOSE AN AMERICAN BEAUTY ROSE...
FRANK SINATRA
I MEAN, LOOK AT ME. YESTERDAY, YOU KNOW WHERE I WAS? I WAS IN THE STATE PEN TEN YEARS AGO I WAS ON TOP OF THE WORLD...

HEHH... JIMMY CAGNEY, RIGHT?
HUH?
"TOP OF THE WORLD, MA!" THAT MOVIE--WHITE HEAT HE WAS ONE OF THE GREAT MOVIE PSYCHOPATHS!
CAMELLIA'S TRAGIC, SHE CAN'T BE MINE...
YO! BARTENDER! FILL 'EM UP!
MAGNOLIA'S MAGIC, MAKES MAGGIE SHINE
THIS GUY I KNOW, HE SAID, "GO TO A BAR FOR ME"... AN' THESE'RE THE FIRST DRINKS I'VE HAD IN SEVEN YEARS YOU BELIEVE THAT?
SURE
...HUG YOU, ORCHID'S DIVINE, STILL I FINALLY CHOSE AN AMERICAN BEAUTY ROSE!..
Long John
SMART GUY Y'KNOW, I USED TO BE A BIG FISH K NGS... PRES DENTS...I PLAYED GOLF WITH THE SHAH OF IRAN...


WELL, SHE'S CLINGIER THAN IVY AND SHE'S ZINGIER THAN BLACK-EYED SUSAN...
JEEZ... IT RILLY SOUNDS LIKE YOU GOT A ROUGH DEAL!
SUUUUUUURE I DID! AND YOU KNOW WHY? THE BITCH, THAT'S WHY SUSAN THE BITCH YOU WANNA SEE A PHOTO?
UH... SURE
HOW CAN I CHOOSE ONE? I LOVE THEM ALL... STILL I FINALLY CHOSE...
THAGS HER BITCH OOOKAY, GET THIS I MEET HER AND SHE'S A CROUPIER IN VEGAS, AND SHE'S HEADING FOR BIG TROUBLE...
SHE'D RIPPED OFF THE HOUSE. THEY DON'T LIKE THAT SO SHE HITCHES UP WITH ME, AND WE GET, UH.. HITCHED.
Y'KNOW, HEARTS AND FLOWERS...
MY AMERICAN BEAUTY ROOOOSE!
CLICK
UH, BE RIGHT BACK...
AGAIN?
CLICK
DAISY IS DARLING, IRIS IS...
I JUS' DON'T GET WOMEN OKAY, I COULDN'T BE THERE THAT MUCH AND THERE WERE, Y'KNOW...
OTHER WOMEN HELLLLL, I'M ONLY HUMAN, HUH?
BITCH. AN I WAS UNDER A LOTTA PRESSURE. I WAS GONNA SET UP ON MY OWN ..
THAT WAS WHERE THE PLO STUFF CAME IN BUT THAT WENT ROTTEN...


LEX HIGH 'N' MIGHTY LUTHOR. THE GUY DOESN'T KNOW EVERYTHING.. BASTARD.
OKAY, I SLAP HER AROUND A BIT. BUT I'M, Y'KNOW, UNDER A STRAIN. AND WOMEN LIKE THAT KIND OF STUFF DON'T TELL ME THEY DON'T
SO THEN ONE NIGHT I COME HOME AND THERE'S JUST THIS NOTE IT SAYS SHE'S GONE BYE BYE BLACKBIRD
AMERICAN BEAUTY ROSE
WILLOW IS TALL, VIOLET'S KISSES TWO LIPS RECALL...
SHE'D SPLIT TO THIS EX OF HERS SOME MAD SCIENTIST TYPE
AND THEN THE GRAND JURY STUFF STARTS AND THE BITCH DECIDES TO TESTIFY...
WHAT DID SHE KNOW, HUH? TELL ME THAT? WHAT DID THE BITCH KNOW?
DON' KNOW, MAN
TOO DAMN MUCH...
...HUG YOU, ORCHID'S DIVINE...
FRANK SINATRA
SEVEN YEARS! SEVEN YEARS IN THE SLAMMER BECAUSE OF THAT BITCH! HER AND HER MAD-FRIGGIN'-SCIENTIST BOYFRIEND
I MEAN, LEX BLAMES ME FOR ALL THAT THAT'S WHY HE WOULDN'T GIVE ME MY JOB BACK... 'S NOT LEX'S FAULT...
THASS HIC! TOUGH...

TOUGH? TOO DAMN RIGHT IT'S TOUGH! YOU KNOW WHAT I'M GONNA DO?
UHHHH.
I'M GONNA GO FIND THAT STINKING BOYFRIEND OF HERS AND I'M GONNA SHOW THE BASTARD THAT NOBODY SCREWS UP CARL THORNE'S LIFE!
NOBODY!
I'M DAFFY AS A DAFFODIL, IT'S LAUGHABLE THE WAY I THRILL...
I'M GONNA BEAT HIM HALFWAY INTO TOMORROW! THASS WHAT I'M GONNA DO...
HEY, UH, PAL, I MEAN, WHA' 'BOUT YER WIFE?
HER? SUSAN? DON'T WORRY ABOUT HER, MAN...
I KILLED THE BITCH ALREADY.
MMM I FINALLY CHOSE AN AMERICAN BEAUTY ROSE!
AMERICAN BEAUTY ROSE


Nikon
CLICK
NIKKOR 50mm

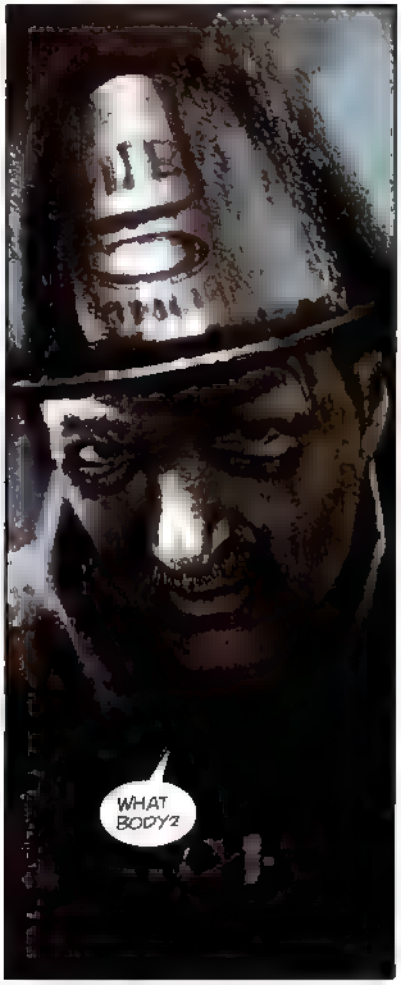
I ASSUMED YOU'D WANT TO SEE THIS, MR STERLING

I DON'T WANT THIS TOUCHED
SIR

HEY, ROXY? YEAH I GOT A PICKUP FOR YOU.. UH-HUH .CORNER OF MAIN STREET AND ELM
WELL, I'D SAY IT'S SORTA BODY-SIZED.. YOU GOT IT, . I'LL BE HERE OK

SIR, YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO BE KEPT INFORMED..
YEAH WELL, I JUST SAW THE BODY, AND... SHE WASN'T HUMAN NO, SIR, I'M CERTAIN
I DON'T KNOW MAYBE SOME KIND OF PLANT...?
MM-HM TAKEN CARE OF YOU GOT IT

YOU NEVER FOUND THAT BODY

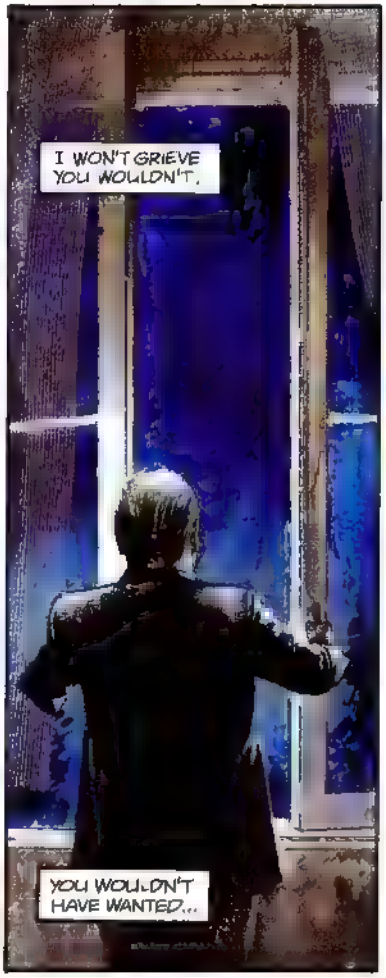

WHAT BODY?

CLICK

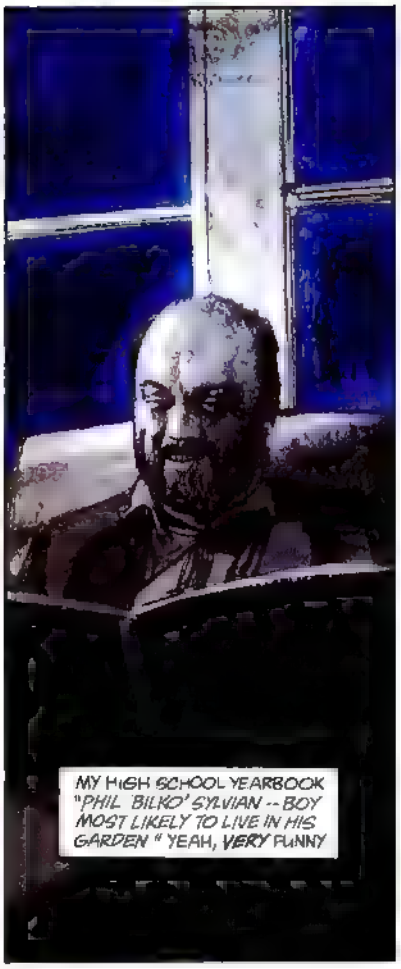
YOU LEFT THE WINDOW OPEN

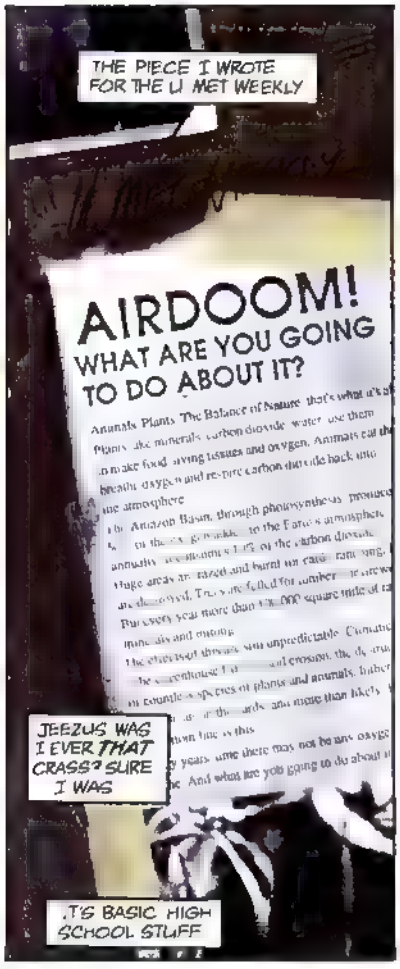
YOU COULD HAVE COME IN THROUGH THE WINDOW THIS EVENING
MAYBE COME DOWNSTAIRS, TALKED FOR A BIT..

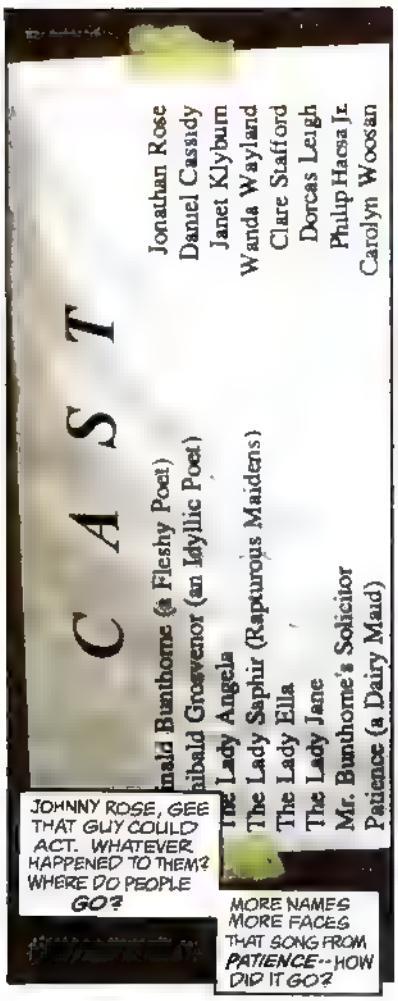
YOU'RE DEAD BUT YOU KNEW WHAT YOU WERE DOING


I WON'T GRIEVE YOU WOULDN'T.
YOU WOULDN'T HAVE WANTED..

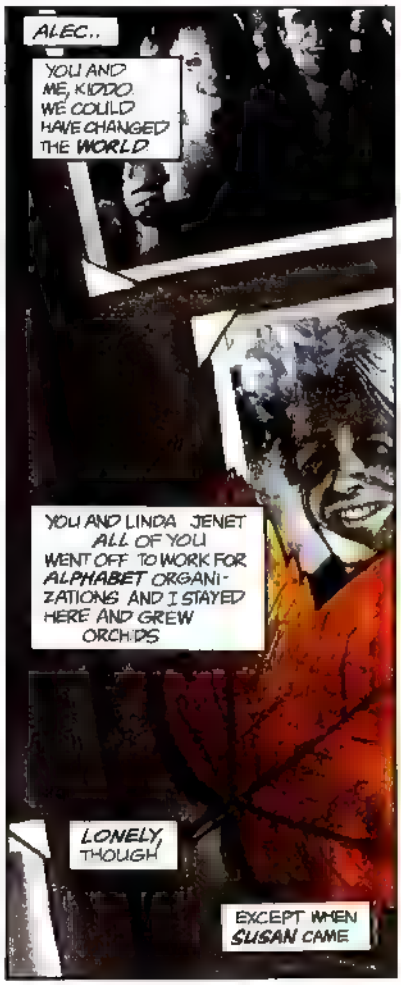
CAN'T SLEEP
WON'T SLEEP
RAP ■ BOOK
VIGIL FOR THE DEAD
THE SCRAPS OF MY LIFE CUTTINGS IN A CUTTINGS BOOK THEY'LL NEVER BE PLANTED NEVER TAKE ROOT
PRETTY POSTCARDS, SUZY WHAT WERE YOU DOING IN AMSTERDAM?


MY HIGH SCHOOL YEARBOOK "PHIL 'BILKO' SYLVIAN -- BOY MOST LIKELY TO LIVE IN HIS GARDEN" YEAH, VERY FUNNY


THE PIECE I WROTE FOR THE U MET WEEKLY
AIRDOOM!
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?
JEEZUS WAS I EVER THAT CRASS? SURE I WAS
IT'S BASIC HIGH SCHOOL STUFF

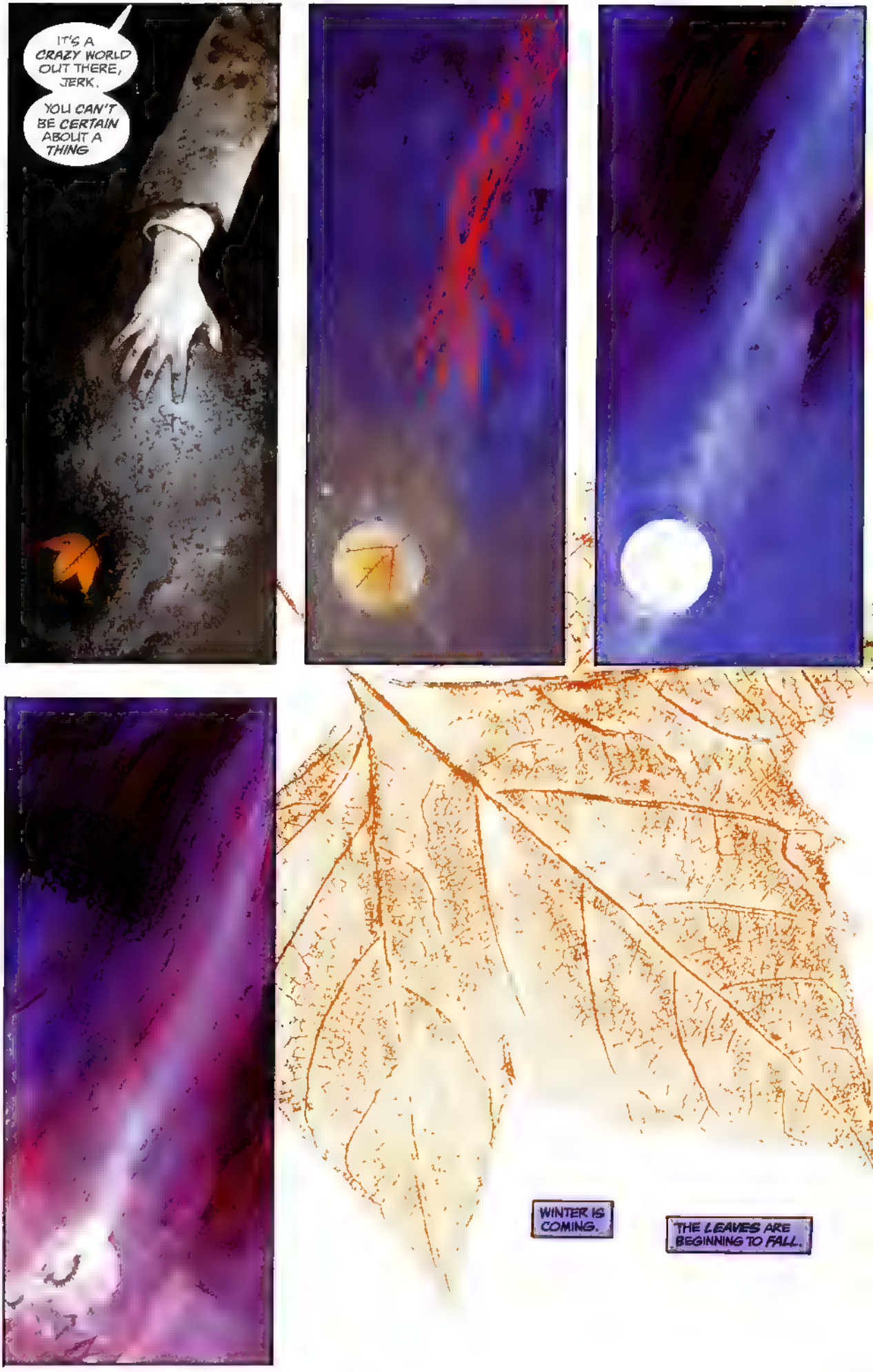

CAST
Jonathan Rose
Daniel Cassidy
Janet Klyburn
Wanda Wayland
Clare Stafford
Dorcas Leigh
Philip Harsa Jr.
Carolyn Woosan
nald Bunthorne (a Fleshy Poet)
hibald Grosvenor (an Idyllic Poet)
The Lady Angela
The Lady Saphir (Rapturous Maidens)
The Lady Ella
The Lady Jane
Mr. Bunthorne's Solicitor
Patience (a Dairy Maid)
JOHNNY ROSE, GEE THAT GUY COULD ACT. WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THEM? WHERE DO PEOPLE GO?
MORE NAMES MORE FACES THAT SONG FROM PATIENCE -- HOW DID IT GO?

"THEN A SENTIMENTAL PASSION OF A VEGETABLE FASHION MUST DELIGHT YOUR LANGUID SPLEEN,
"AN ATTACHMENT A LA PLATO FOR A BASHFUL YOUNG POTATO OR A NOT-TOO-FRENCH FRENCH BEAN!
"THOUGH THE PHILISTINES MAY JOSTLE, YOU WILL RANK AS AN APOSTLE IN THE HIGH AESTHETIC BAND, IF YOU WALK DOWN PICCADILLY WITH A POPPY OR A LILY IN YOUR MEDIEVAL HAND
"AND EVERYONE WILL SAY AS YOU "


ALEC..
YOU AND ME, KIDDO. WE COULD HAVE CHANGED THE WORLD
YOU AND LINDA JENET ALL OF YOU WENT OFF TO WORK FOR ALPHABET ORGANI-ZATIONS AND I STAYED HERE AND GREW ORCHIDS
LONELY, THOUGH
EXCEPT WHEN SUSAN CAME

2:00 AM
READ SOMEWHERE THAT MOST DEATHS OCCUR AT 2:00 AM
RIP BLACK ORCHID
RIP SUSAN
COMING BACK FROM THE RESTAURANT THE CAB PULLED OVER IN SOME WASTELAND AND SUSAN WAS WASTED
HORRIBLE PHRASE BUT ACCURATE
ONE HUMAN LIFE, WASTED
AND
AND THE MAN IN THE BLACK MASK SHOT SUSAN
BANG
BANG
BANG
AND HE SHOT SUSAN
BANG
BANG
BANG
AND HE SHOT
UH?
OKAY, OKAY! I'M COMING!
"AND EVERYONE WILL SAY AS YOU WALK YOUR FLOWERY WAY IF..."

I DON'T BELIEVE IT DO YOU KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS?
OKAY, I HEARD YOU!
WHO IS IT?
"...HE'S CONTENT WITH A VEGETABLE LOVE WHICH WOULD CERTAINLY NOT SUIT ME..."
DOCTOR SYLVIAN? I GOT A MESSAGE FOR YA
AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT?
"WHY, WHAT A MOST PARTICULARLY PURE YOUNG MAN.."
SURE, I KNOW HOW IT SOUNDS THIS CHICK, SHE GAVE ME TEN BUCKS TO GIVE YOU A PACKAGE
SAID HER NAME WAS SUE SUSAN LINDEN
HUH? SUE'S... HANG ON
"THIS PURE YOUNG MAN MUST..."
UH, THIS WOMAN YOU'RE CERTAIN SHE SAID --
SO I LIED
SUE ME


IT'S A CRAZY WORLD OUT THERE, JERK.
YOU CAN'T BE CERTAIN ABOUT A THING
WINTER IS COMING.
THE LEAVES ARE BEGINNING TO FALL.

GOING DOWN.
GOING BACK
FALLING.
IN DREAMS WE FIND ONLY CONTRADICTIONS.
I TUMBLE INTO THE PAST, AWASH IN ANOTHER'S MEMORIES.
I DREAM MY SISTER.

COOL AS EVENING, SOFT AS DOWN HER SONG MELTS INTO FLAME
FURTHER DOWN FURTHER BACK. THE DREAMS ARE SUSAN...
MOTHER...
AT EASE FOR THE FIRST TIME AMONG HIS COMPUTERS, I CHART DNA SPIRALS FOR HIM, UNTANGLE CHROMOSOMES, PROJECT POSSIBILITIES.
-APPY
THOUGHTS OF CARL INTRUDE OCCASIONALLY, MORE SO SINCE THE SUBPOENA ARRIVED. I DON'T LET IT BOTHER ME
I'LL TALK TO THEM, TELL THEM WHAT THEY WANT TO KNOW. PHIL SAYS HE'LL BE GOING DOWN FOR A LONG TIME
THERE'S NOTHING CARL CAN DO TO HARM ME ANYMORE.
THE UNDERTOW OF TIME PULLS ME FURTHER BACK, FURTHER DOWN
SO MUCH SEEMS ARBITRARY IN DREAMS WE FIND ONLY QUESTIONS
AND THE ANSWERS FALL RANDOMLY, LIKE CARDS OR DICE
SHE HAS TO--I HAVE TO GET OUT OF THIS CITY. NIKKI SAYS THEY SUSPECT I'VE BEEN CUTTING MYSELF IN ON THE HOUSE'S TAKE
THIS COULD MEAN BIG TROUBLE
AN OUT-OF-TOWNER SITS DOWN, PUTS DOWN HIS CHIPS, DOWNS HIS DRINK.
HE'S CUTE. HE'S COOL. HE ASKS ME TO COME TO DINNER WITH HIM AFTERWARDS.

HOUSE RULES SAY NO, BUT I SAY YES.
HIS NAME IS CARL. I THINK I LIKE HIM.
AND THE WORLD DISSOLVES, DISBANDS, DISMANTLES...
MY FATHER. SUSAN'S FATHER. AND I KNOW THIS IS A DREAM BECAUSE HE DOESN'T HIT ME, OR DO ANY OF THOSE THINGS HE USED TO DO TO ME
HE JUST SITS ME DOWN
AND HE TALKS TO ME. HE EXPLAINS EVERYTHING. WHO I AM. WHERE I'M GOING. THE WHOLE THING. THE MEANING OF IT ALL...
IT MAKES ME FEEL SO GOOD
AND EVEN AS HE TELLS ME THIS STUFF, I KNOW I'LL NEVER REMEMBER IT WHEN I AWAKE. THEN THE WINDS OF TIME BEGIN TO BLOW FOR A MOMENT I SURFACE
AND THEN THE DREAMS TAKE ME AWAY, SWEEP ME APART;
AND
ONCE
AGAIN
I'M
GOING
DOWN.
FA
LL
ING...
C'MON C'MON, WAKE UP..
SLEEPYTIME'S OVER. COME ON, JERK!

UHN
WAKE THE HE... UP! NOW! I WANNA TALK
WHO...ARE YOU? WH WHY.. ?
YOU DON'T RECOGNIZE ME?
AW, C'MON. YOU CAME TO MY WEDDING...
YOU'RE... CARL THORNE
SUSAN'S EX-HUSB -

YEAH
YOU REMEMBER THAT MUCH, HUH?
YOU SHOULDA REMEMBERED THAT WHILE YOU WERE MESSING AROUND WITH MY WIFE!
BUT I DIDN'T..
UNNG!
DON'T GIVE ME THAT CRAP I KNOW WHAT MEN DO TO WOMEN I KNOW WHAT THAT SLUT WAS LIKE!
SUSAN
THORNE. UH, CARL, LISTEN, WE'RE BOTH REASONABLE MEN, WE..UH...CAN WORK THIS... LET ME UP AND =KKOF= UH WE CAN, UH, TALK THIS.

SHE COULDA HAD ME! DAMMIT, SHE DID HAVE ME! AND SHE WENT TO YOU?
JUST THE THOUGHT IS ENOUGH TO MAKE ME SICK TO MY GODDAMN STOMACH
I MEAN, I LOVED HER, Y'KNOW? I REALLY DID.
SNFF
I
LOVED
HER...
UNH...
SHE'S DEAD, CARL. THIS WON'T BRING HER BACK
OF COURSE SHE'S DEAD
WHO THE HELL DID YOU THINK IT WAS THAT KILLED HER?

...YOU?
I THINK I'M GONNA GIVE YOU A LESSON FROM MY HARD-WON EXPERIENCE SAY "THANK YOU, TEACHER."
OH GOD, THIS IS--

SAY IT!
THANK YOU..
TEACHER.
HERE, LET'S TIDY YOU UP A BIT...
YOU SEE, ONE THING I'VE LEARNED IS THAT THERE'S TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE THERE'S THE WOLVES AND THERE'S THE SHEEP.
NOW THE WOLVES--
THAT'S ME--
WE GO OUT AND WE FIGHT FOR WHAT WE WANT WE TAKE WHAT WE WANT WE GODDAMN KILL FOR WHAT WE WANT.

AND THE SHEEP.
THAT'S YOU--
THE SHEEP JUST FOLLOW THE RULES. THEY GOT NO DREAMS. THEY AREN'T ALIVE. THEY COULDN'T KILL
ONLY THE WOLVES ARE REALLY ALIVE AND TONIGHT,
TONIGHT THE WOLVES ARE RUNNING.
SO WHAT AM I, PHIL?
MMNGRH
SPEAK UP..
..I CAN'T HEAR YOU!
YOU'RE A RATTLESNAKE, CARL! YOU'RE CRAZY!
THEY SHOULD HAVE KILLED YOU YEARS AGO. I WISH TO GOD I HAD!
YOU COULDN'T
YOU'RE A SHEEP
SO WHADDAYA DO HERE, VIKTOR FRANKENGTEIN?
THIS WHERE YOU CREATE LIFE? ZAT WHAT'S GOIN' DOWN?
GO AWAY, CARL
LEAVE ME ALONE

GREAT PLACE WHEE-OW! WHAT'S THIS, HUH?
LOOKS REAL DELICATE.
REAL EXPENSIVE
OOPS, CLUMSY CARL!
CLUMSY! OOPS, CLUMSY CLUMSY CARL!
CLUMSY! ALWAYS BREAKING THINGS!
YOU GOT ANY WHISKEY HUH?
SOMETHING FOR A GUY TO DRINK?
YA GOTTA HAVE SOMETHING IN THE PLACE!
NOPE, NOTHIN' HERE...
AHAA!
SO YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD HOLD OUT ON CARL THORNE, DID YA?

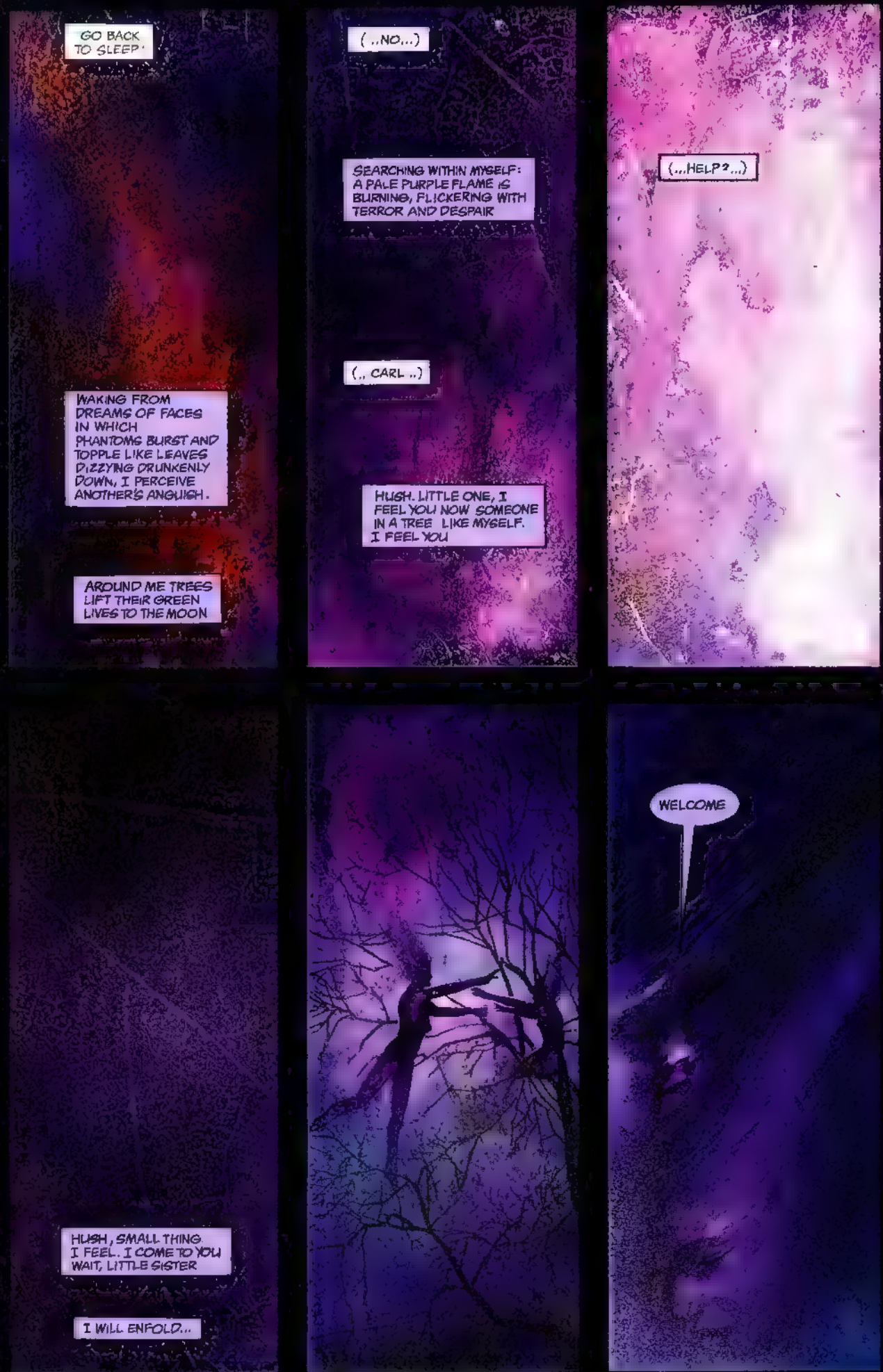
I SAID, "SO YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD HOLD OUT ON ME?"
SCUM
SHA DOO-BE DOODO DOO-DOOBY DO DOO
DOO DOOBY DOODOO DA-DOOBY DADOOOO
DOO DOO DADOO DOO DOOBY DA-DOOOOO
THAT'S WHY THE LAY-DEE IZZA TRAMP!

WHAT
THE HELL?
STATUES?
I DON'T BELIEVE IT.
STATUES OF MY WIFE...
...OUT OF...
...PLANTS?
THAT'S CRAZY
TH-THAT'S REALLY WEIRD
THAT'S JUST SO...

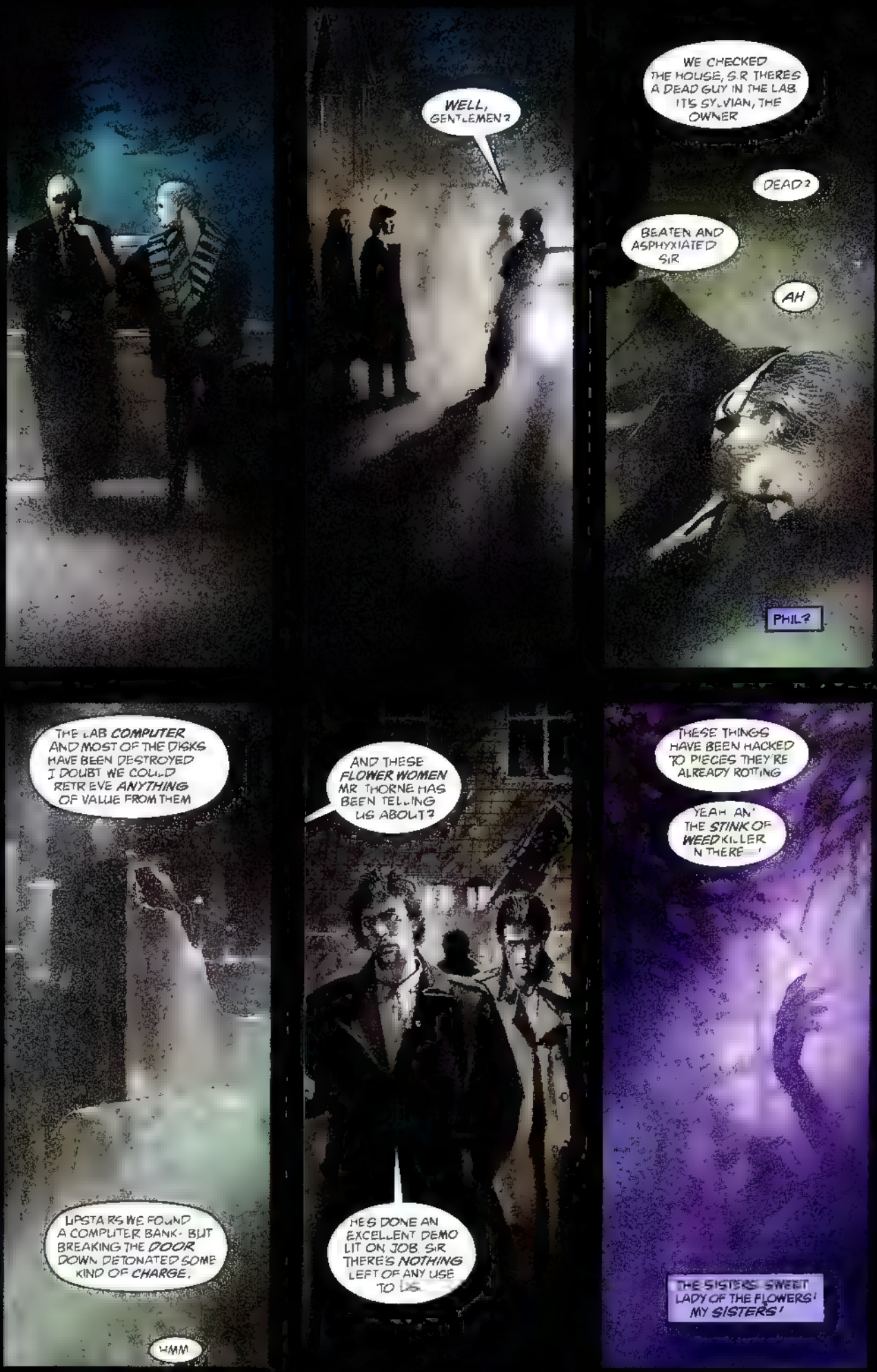
CRAZY·
UH?
TOXI

AW, THIS IS GETTING SICK...
A BABY SUSAN?
COME TO DADDY, LITTLE SUZY
HELLO, CARL
AAAH!
I DON'T BELIEVE THIS STUFF.
HEY, COME BACK HERE!
I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU..

I SHOULD CALL HIM
I STILL GOT THE EMERGENCY NUMBER.
DON'T HAVE CHANGED IT, BOSS
DON'T HAVE CHANGED IT.
YES, THIS IS HE.
WHO? I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU NEVER TO.
YOU FOUND WHAT? ARE YOU DRUNK?...
WHERE EXACTLY ARE YOU?
VERY WELL I'LL BE DOWN THERE DON'T TOUCH ANYTHING...
A JOB, THORNE?
WE'LL SEE
PEACHES? WHEREYAGOIN? COMEBACKTO BED
I'M SORRY, ELYSSA...


GO BACK TO SLEEP·
WAKING FROM DREAMS OF FACES IN WHICH PHANTOMS BURST AND TOPPLE LIKE LEAVES DIZZYING DRUNKENLY DOWN, I PERCEIVE ANOTHER'S ANGUISH.
AROUND ME TREES LIFT THEIR GREEN LIVES TO THE MOON
(..NO...)
SEARCHING WITHIN MYSELF: A PALE PURPLE FLAME IS BURNING, FLICKERING WITH TERROR AND DESPAIR
(.. CARL ..)
HUSH. LITTLE ONE, I FEEL YOU NOW SOMEONE IN A TREE LIKE MYSELF. I FEEL YOU
(...HELP?...)
HUSH, SMALL THING I FEEL. I COME TO YOU WAIT, LITTLE SISTER
I WILL ENFOLD...
WELCOME

HEARTS DON'T BREAK BUT THEY CAN SHATTER
WA T
YOU DON'T MIND AND I DON'T MATTER
...I COULDA GIVEN YOU THE WORLD ON A PLATTER
...IT'S JUST A CASE OF MIND OVER MATTER.
TURN THAT RADIO OFF
YESSIR
WE'RE GOING DOWN TOGETH--
SEARCH THE HOUSE AND GROUNDS BRING THORNE DOWN TO ME I WANT A FULL REPORT IN TEN MINUTES

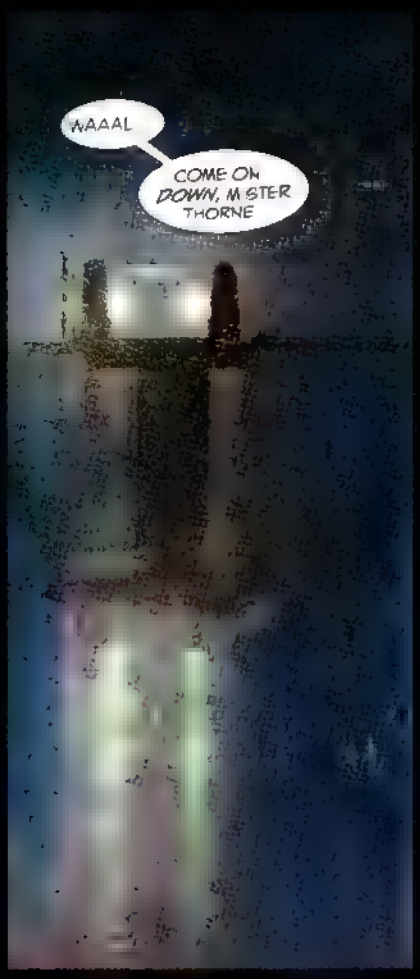

WELL, GENTLEMEN?
WE CHECKED THE HOUSE, SIR THERES A DEAD GUY IN THE LAB. ITS SYLVIAN, THE OWNER
DEAD?
BEATEN AND ASPHYXIATED SIR
AH
PHIL?
THE LAB COMPUTER AND MOST OF THE DISKS HAVE BEEN DESTROYED I DOUBT WE COULD RETRIEVE ANYTHING OF VALUE FROM THEM
UPSTAIRS WE FOUND A COMPUTER BANK- BUT BREAKING THE DOOR DOWN DETONATED SOME KIND OF CHARGE.
HMM
AND THESE FLOWER WOMEN MR THORNE HAS BEEN TELLING US ABOUT?
HES DONE AN EXCELLENT DEMO LIT ON JOB SIR THERES NOTHING LEFT OF ANY USE TO US
THESE THINGS HAVE BEEN HACKED TO PIECES THEY'RE ALREADY ROTTING
YEAH AN' THE STINK OF WEEDKILLER N THERE!
THE SISTERS SWEET LADY OF THE FLOWERS! MY SISTERS!

I SEE
BUT, NOW, LEX, OK, SURE, MAYBE I MESSED UP. BUT THERE'S STILL THE ONE I TOLD YOU ABOUT THE ONE THAT FLEW OFF...
IF IT EXISTS, IT'LL BE MILES AWAY BY NOW HOWEVER, I'LL GET MY PEOPLE ONTO FINDING IT
HHHHEH CARL...
IF ANYONE ELSE HAD DONE WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO A PROJECT I COULD HAVE INVESTED IN...
BY NOW THEY'D HAVE A NEW PASSPORT AND BE IN HIDING, TREMBLING, DOWN IN SOME OBSCURE SOUTH AMERICAN REPUBLIC.
YOU?
YOU GET ME OUT OF BED TO INSPECT YOUR HANDIWORK, AND YOU ASK ME FOR A JOB
YOU MAKE ME TIRED, THORNE
TAKE H M AWAY I DON'T WANT TO SEE H M AGAIN
I DON T WANT ANYBODY TO EVER SEE H M AGA N

I'M SORRY, PHIL
THIS WAS BECAUSE OF ME, WASN'T IT?
WHY IS IT THAT ALL THE PEOPLE YOU REALLY CARE ABOUT GET KILLED?"
I WISH I KNEW, PHIL. I WISH I UNDERSTOOD WHAT WAS GOING ON
AND I WILL.
I'M SORRY

FOLLOW ME AND STAY CLOSE OKAY?
SURE
THAT MAN THAT WAS CARL, WASN'T IT?
I...I THINK SO YOU CAN REMEMBER?
I S'POSE
I WAS... MARRIED TO HIM.
HE HURT ME HE WAS ALWAYS HURTING ME
THOSE MEN WILL THEY MAKE HIM STOP HURTING PEOPLE?
I THINK SO I...YES, I THINK SO.
HEY..
UH, LISTEN YOU GUYS, IT'S, UH, WELL, MR LUTHOR, HE'S JUST A LITTLE DOWN, BUT, UH, HE DOESN'T MEAN THAT--
SHUT UP
SURE SURE, I'LL SHUT UP, IT'S JUST THAT, Y'KNOW, YOU GUYS, ME, WE'RE ALL--
=UHN=
AH-OH GOD. OH SHEEIT!
NOW SHUT UP

HELLO? HELLO YES CHARLENE I HOPE I DIDN'T WAKE YOU NO? GOOD
I WANT AN APB TO ALL STAFF AND EYES WE'RE LOOKING FOR FLOWER-WOMEN
YOU HEARD ME
ONE POSSIBLY MORE OF THESE CREATURES
IT APPEARS TO BE A CHILD BETWEEN THREE AND EIGHT YEARS OLD PURPLE, I'M TOLD
THEY CAN FLY, SO ALMOST ANYWHERE, I'D GUESS
USUAL FINDER'S FEE EXACTLY
THANK YOU, CHARLENE
GOODNIGHT

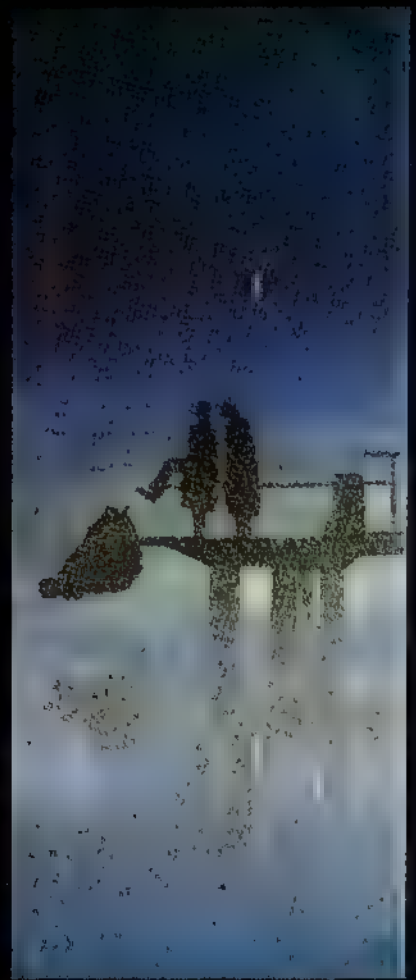

AAAAL
COME ON DOWN, MISTER THORNE

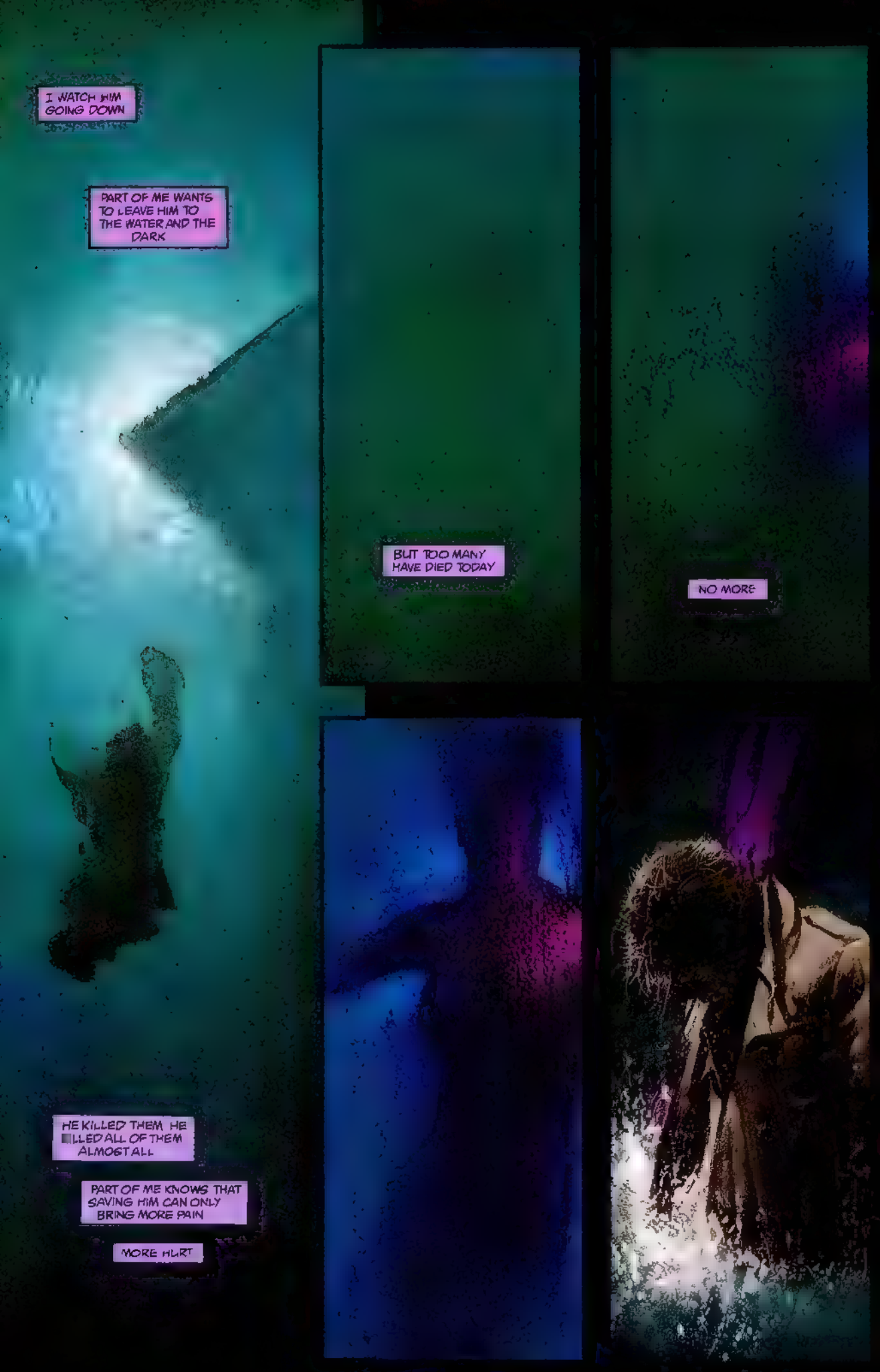
YEAH YEAH, I'M COMING SORRY

OH NOOO OH PLEASE GOD, NO, T WAS A MISTAKE
PLEASE DON'T PLEASE I- GOTTA TALK TO LEX, TELL HIM ABOUT THE PLO SHIPMENT
I'VE STILL GOT IT I-
SHUT UP
WHO'S GOT THE PADLOCK? C'MON, MOVE IT!

AN NOW, LADIES N GENNELMEN, FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT, MISTER HARRY HOUDINI WILL DEMONSTRATE FOR US

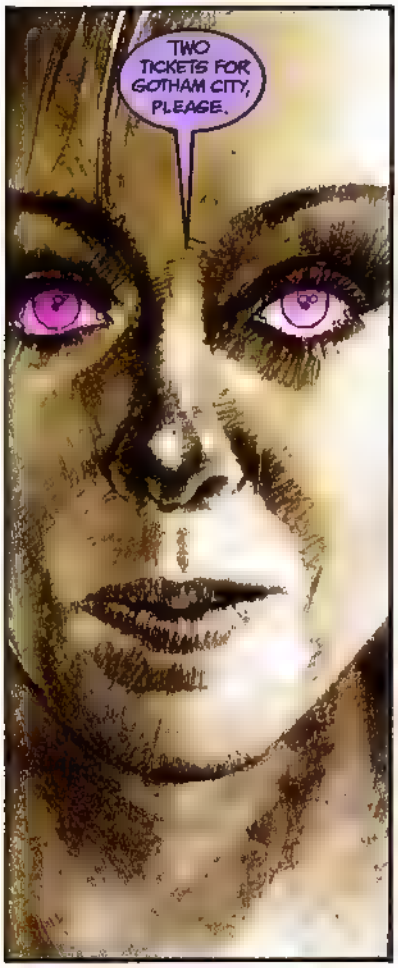
SHUT UP, BRAD



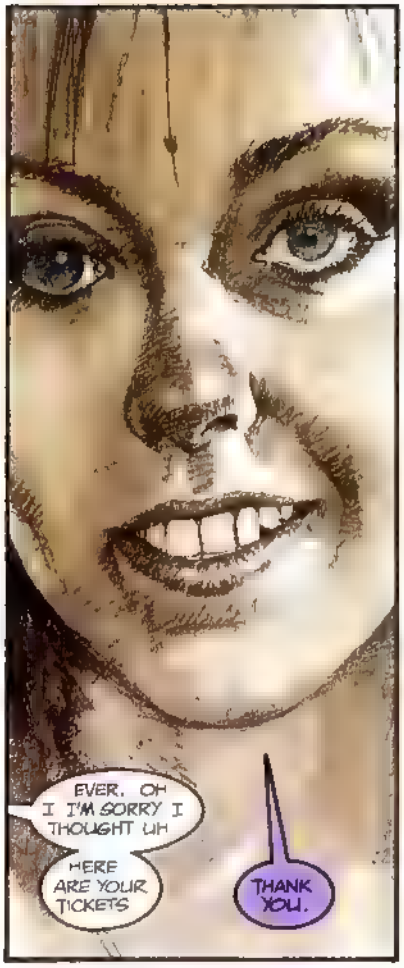

I WATCH HIM GOING DOWN
PART OF ME WANTS TO LEAVE HIM TO THE WATER AND THE DARK
BUT TOO MANY HAVE DIED TODAY
NO MORE
HE KILLED THEM HE ■LLED ALL OF THEM ALMOST ALL
PART OF ME KNOWS THAT SAVING HIM CAN ONLY BRING MORE PAIN
MORE HURT

WE JUST LEAVE HIM?
YES WE HAVE TO GO BACK TO THE HOUSE. THERE ARE THINGS I MUST DO.
THE SISTERS ARE GONE
PHIL IS DEAD
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WE ARE, LITTLE ONE
SUZY. I'M SUZY.
SUZY
IF I COULD BE WHAT PHIL WANTED ME TO BE...
IF I KNEW WHAT HE [illegible]...
IF I KNEW WHAT WE WERE...

CAN I CALL YOU "MOMMY"?
UH...SURE I'D LIKE THAT
I'M HUNGRY, MOMMY
IT'S ALL RIGHT, DARLING. THE SUN WILL BE UP SOON
, FROM PLATFORM TWENTY SEVEN TWENTY SEVEN ALL ABOARD
FOR CHARLESTON CINCINNAT , CHICAGO - CHANGE AT CINC NNATI FOR CENTRAL CITY AND THE WEST
PLATFORM TWO WILL BE GOTHAM EXPRESS GOTHAM CITY ONLY FROM PLATFORM TWO
DOWN TO THE STATION CONCOURSE
. TO RA LROAD INFORMATION ABILENE MACCORMACK

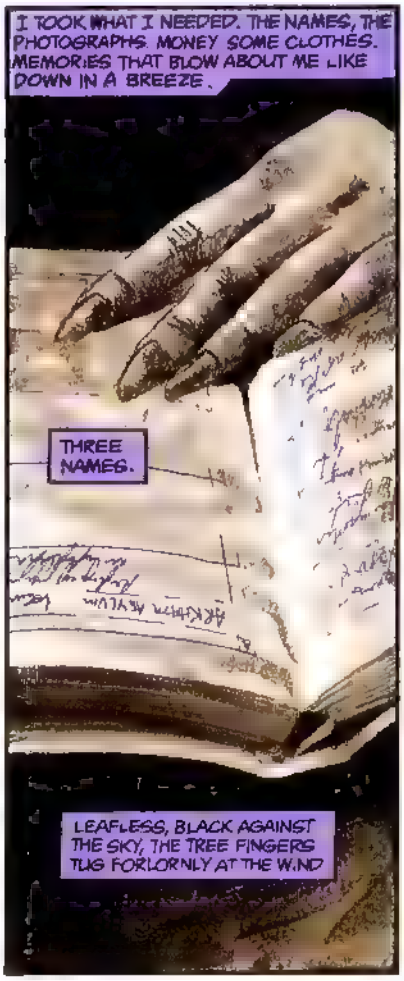

TWO TICKETS FOR GOTHAM CITY, PLEASE.

CERTAINLY DEAR THAT'LL BE NINETEEN DOLLARS UH, I DON'T WANT TO PRY, BUT, ARE YOU WEARING CONTACTS?
CONTACTS?
WELL, DEAR, I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE WITH REAL VIOLET EYES BEFORE I'VE HEARD ABOUT THEM BUT..
THEY AREN'T COMMON?
IF YOU DON'T COUNT LIZ TAYLOR, HA-HA, BUT I'VE NEVER...


EVER. OH I I'M SORRY I THOUGHT UH
HERE ARE YOUR TICKETS
THANK YOU.

OUTSIDE THE FINGERS OF THE TREES CLUTCH THE SKY, SCRATCH THE AIR, DRAG AT THE WIND .
ANTICIPATING
APPEARANCE IS THE SIMPLEST THING PIGMENT AND PETAL ONLY
RED GREEN BLACK
WONDERING WHAT I SEEK... AN END TO IGNORANCE? A REMEDY OR COUNTERWEIGHT TO PHIL'S LOST BREATHING?

HE WAS SO GENTLE
SO MUCH GREENNESS SO MUCH WORLD.
HOUR BY HOUR I FALL FURTHER INTO, REMEMBER MORE OF THE HUMANITY; ITS CUSTOMS, ITS HABITS, ITS DREAMS
THE LITTLE ONE COULD SCARCELY FLY THE MILES


I TOOK WHAT I NEEDED. THE NAMES, THE PHOTOGRAPHS. MONEY SOME CLOTHES. MEMORIES THAT BLOW ABOUT ME LIKE DOWN IN A BREEZE.
THREE NAMES.
LEAFLESS, BLACK AGAINST THE SKY, THE TREE FINGERS TUG FORLORNLY AT THE WIND

...ABOUT THE THINGS THAT'TA GONE DOWN IN THIS PLACE, IT'D GIVE YA THE SCREAMING MEEMIES...
YOU'RE A CAB DRIVER, YOU HEAR THINGS, Y'KNOW?
I MEAN, OK, A NUTHOUSE IS A NUTHOUSE, BUT...
WELL, SHEE, ARKHAM. I MEAN, I READ THIS BOOK ABOUT ARKHAM ONCE THEY WENT INTO THIS GUY'S CELL-- I FORGET HIS NAME OK, AND NOBODY'S SEEN HIS CELLMATE IN WEEKS--
- THEY THINK HE'S ESCAPED OR SOMETHING Y'KNOW, AND SO THEY GO INTO THE GUY'S CELL AND THEY LOOK DOWN UNDER THE BED AND. THIS IS SO GROSS. .
WELL, LOOK YOU OUGHTA KNOW
A) ARKHAM HAS A "NO VISITORS" POLICY
AND B) EVEN IF I COULD .ET YOU IN-- WHICH I CAN'T-- YOU COULDN'T SEE WOODRUE
HE AIN'T HERE
DO YOU KNOW WHERE WE COULD FIND HIM?
WHAT DO WE DO NOW, MOMMA?
I DON'T KNOW WE HAVE NOWHERE LEFT TO GO
HOLLAND IS DEAD WOODRUE HAS GONE PHIL HAD NO ADDRESS FOR ISLEY...
WE GO BACK TO GOTHAM CITY, I SUPPOSE...
THERE MUST BE SOMEONE THERE WHO CAN TELL US SOMETHING
MUSTN'T THERE?
THERE MUST BE SOMEONE WHO KNOWS
COME, LITTLE ONE WE WILL FLY SOUTH.
IT'S NOT "LITTLE ONE." DON'T CALL ME THAT
IT'S SUZY

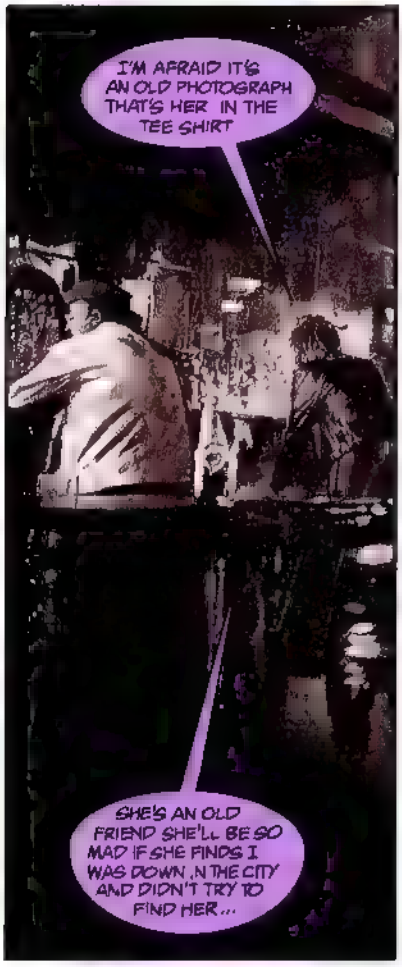
SHE SAYS
" H , CARL "
HEHHH

GEDDAWAY FROM ME,YA CRAZY!
SUZY
WAKE UP LI'L SUZY WAKE UP!
WAKE UP LI'L SOOOOZY. WAKE UP
HEY BUDDY, HOW DO I GET TO PARK STREET FROM HERE? HUH?
THASS GREAT.
YEAH I LOVE YA MAN
I REALLY DO THASS GREAT
YEAH

PARK S
NOBODY KNEW SUZY
I DIDN'T EVEN TELL YOU
HEY, MY KIDS.
DADDY'S HOME.
IT'S OUR WEDDING ANNIVERSARY, BABY 0-6-5-77
OK, MISTER EX-LUTHOR YOU WANNA KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR DAMN PLO SHIPMENT?
IT WAS DOWN HERE ALL THE TIME ALL THE GODDAMN TIME!

YOU STAY UP HERE, SUZY. DON'T COME DOWN
I'LL TRY NOT TO BE AWAY TOO LONG.. BUT JUST WAIT FOR ME
OKAY?
I S'POSE
YEAH, OKAY
BUT YOU WON'T BE TOO LONG, WILL YOU?
I DON'T WANT TO STAY HERE ON MY OWN ...
IT'S ALL RIGHT, DARLING. JUST WAIT.
SHE'S CHANGED SO MUCH IN THESE FEW HOURS. AT FIRST SHE SEEMED SO MUCH OLDER, SO MUCH W SER ..
SHE REMEMBERED SO MUCH MORE THAN I DID...
AND NOW SHE'S A CHILD
I PRAY TO WHATEVER GREEN GODDESSES THERE MAY BE THAT SHE ISN'T HURT FURTHER...
...AND THAT MY SEARCH BEARS FRUIT

...IF YOU COULD HELP ME? I'M LOOKING FOR SOMEONE A PAMELA ISLEY...

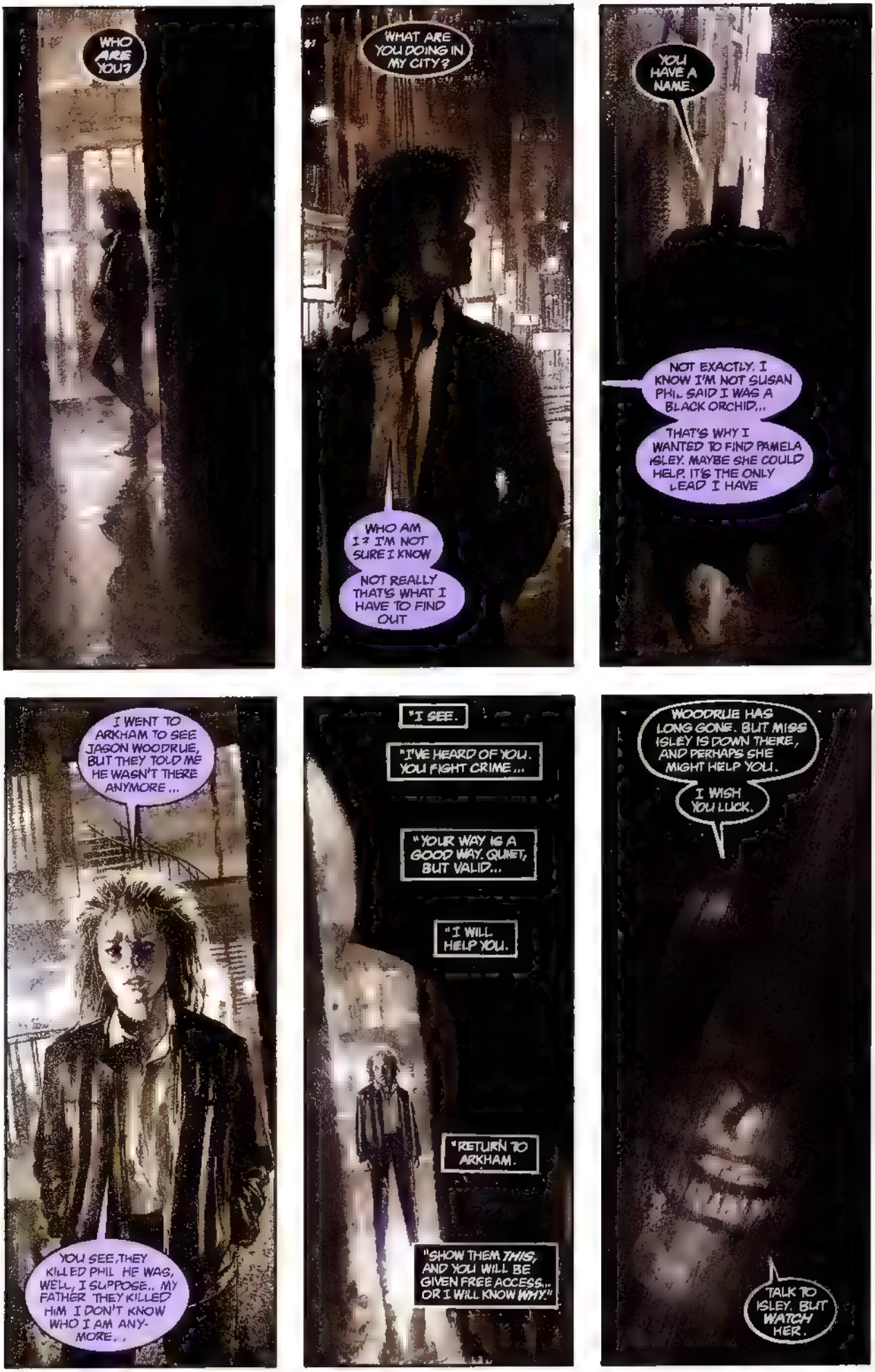

I'M AFRAID IT'S AN OLD PHOTOGRAPH THAT'S HER IN THE TEE SHIRT
SHE'S AN OLD FRIEND SHE'LL BE SO MAD IF SHE FINDS I WAS DOWN IN THE CITY AND DIDN'T TRY TO FIND HER...

"I DON'T KNOW WHAT SHE'S DOING THESE DAYS. IF YOU COULD MAYBE JUST LOOK AT IT AGAIN.. "

NO?

NO?

NO


WHO ARE YOU?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN MY CITY?
WHO AM I? I'M NOT SURE I KNOW
NOT REALLY THAT'S WHAT I HAVE TO FIND OUT
YOU HAVE A NAME.
NOT EXACTLY. I KNOW I'M NOT SUSAN PHIL SAID I WAS A BLACK ORCHID...
THAT'S WHY I WANTED TO FIND PAMELA ISLEY. MAYBE SHE COULD HELP. IT'S THE ONLY LEAD I HAVE
I WENT TO ARKHAM TO SEE JASON WOODRUE, BUT THEY TOLD ME HE WASN'T THERE ANYMORE...
YOU SEE, THEY KILLED PHIL HE WAS, WELL, I SUPPOSE.. MY FATHER THEY KILLED HIM I DON'T KNOW WHO I AM ANY-MORE..
"I SEE.
"I'VE HEARD OF YOU. YOU FIGHT CRIME...
"YOUR WAY IS A GOOD WAY. QUIET, BUT VALID...
"I WILL HELP YOU.
"RETURN TO ARKHAM.
"SHOW THEM THIS, AND YOU WILL BE GIVEN FREE ACCESS... OR I WILL KNOW WHY."
WOODRUE HAS LONG GONE. BUT MISS ISLEY IS DOWN THERE, AND PERHAPS SHE MIGHT HELP YOU.
I WISH YOU LUCK.
TALK TO ISLEY. BUT WATCH HER.

"SHE'S POISON."

HELLO. WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
MOSTLY THEY CALL ME DAN, LITTLE LADY. WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
AN' HOW THE HECK DID YOU CLIMB UP THAT TREE?

I FLEW UP SILLY...
I'LL BE BLOWED! WHAT DID YOU SAY YOUR NAME WAS?

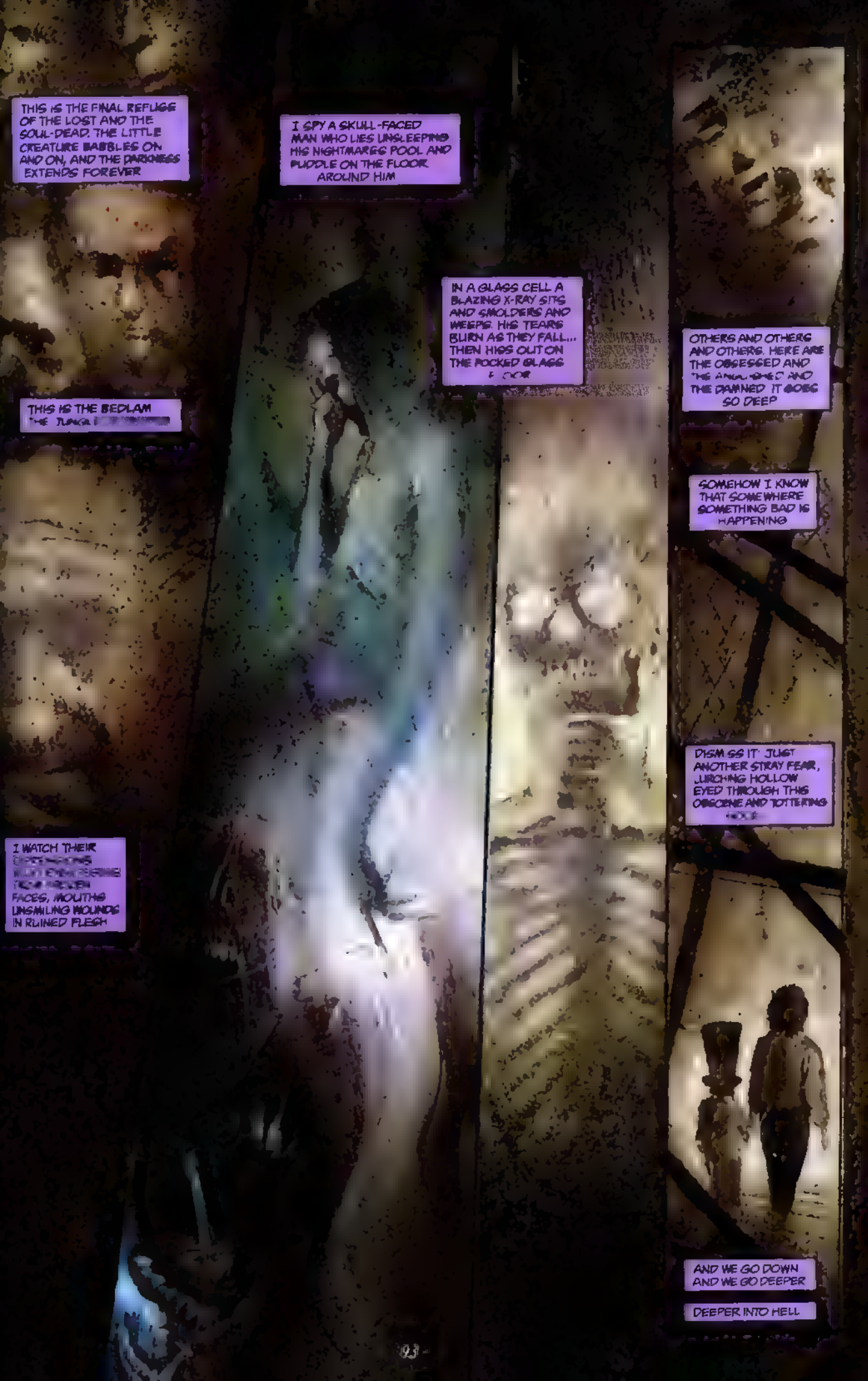
I DIDN'T
IT'S SUZY
JUST SUZY

WELL, JUST-SUZY, YOU WANT TO COME ALONG WITH ME AND SEE SOME KITTENS? PURTIEST LITTLE THINGS YOU EVER DID SEE SOFT AS DOWN AND CUTER'N BUTTONS
I CAN'T BE AWAY TOO LONG, THOUGH
TRUST ME, HONEY. YOUR MOM WILL NEVER EVEN NOTICE YOU'VE GONE

YES OK
I SUPPOSE YOU CAN SEE HER BUT DON'T TAKE ALL DAY
IT'S QUARTER OF FIVE NOW SHE'LL PROBABLY BE IN THE ROMPER ROOM
ROMPER ROOM?
THE RECREATION HALL THROUGH THERE, TURN RIGHT AND JUST KEEP GOING DOWN THE CORRIDOR
...AND THE ELEPHANT SAYS, "MMM ONLY THE FIRST TIME!"
HAHAHAHA HAHAHAHAHA HAHAHAHAHA HAHAHAHA!
MEHH
MY TURN
OK NOW, WHAT DO YOU GET IF YOU CROSS THE ATLANTIC WITH THE TITANIC?
HMMPH GIVE UP WHAT DO YOU GET?
HALFWAY!!
HEEE HEHEH HEEHEHEH HEEHEHEH...
MMM YES ALL RIGHT MY TURN THERE'S A SHIP GOING DOWN IN A STORM, AND THE CAPTAIN'S PARROT..

EXCUSE ME
CAN YOU HELP ME?
HELP YOU?
SURE
ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR?
THERE'S A [redacted] SOMEWHERE PAMELA ISLEY I NEED TO TALK TO HER
YOU WANT TO TALK TO IVY, HUH?
SHE'S IN HER CELL IN THE BASEMENT
YO! HAT! SHOW THIS YOUNG LADY WHERE IVY HANGS OUT
IVY? THIS WAY
HURRY UP
HAT!
LEAVE HER ALONE! FORGET IT, I'LL CUT YOUR FACE OFF! HAT? I'LL KILL YOU, HAT!
BASTARD!

DON'T MIND MR DENT HE GETS LIKE THAT SOMETIMES, BUT IT'S JUST HIS WAY.
HE NEVER REALLY KILLS ANYONE
WELL, EXCEPT FOR WHEN HE DOES K.I.L. THEM I SUPPOSE
I CAN TELL RIDDLES TOO AND JOKES
I HAVE THIS FUNNY SAYING GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE, HATS DO!
OF COURSE YOU HAVE TO BE WEARING ONE OF MY SPECIAL HATS TO REALLY APPRECIATE THE JOKE...


THIS IS THE FINAL REFUGE OF THE LOST AND THE SOUL-DEAD. THE LITTLE CREATURE BABBLES ON AND ON, AND THE DARKNESS EXTENDS FOREVER
I SPY A SKULL-FACED MAN WHO LIES UNSLEEPING HIS NIGHTMARES POOL AND PUDDLE ON THE FLOOR AROUND HIM
IN A GLASS CELL A BLAZING X-RAY SITS AND SMOLDERS AND WEEPS. HIS TEARS BURN AS THEY FALL... THEN HISS OUT ON THE POCKED GLASS FLOOR
OTHERS AND OTHERS AND OTHERS. HERE ARE THE OBSESSED AND THE ANGUISHED AND THE DAMNED. IT GOES SO DEEP
THIS IS THE BEDLAM
SOMEHOW I KNOW THAT SOMEWHERE SOMETHING BAD IS HAPPENING
I WATCH THEIR
FACES, MOUTHS UNSMILING WOUNDS IN RUINED FLESH
DISMISS IT. JUST ANOTHER STRAY FEAR, LURCHING HOLLOW EYED THROUGH THIS OBSCENE AND TOTTERING
AND WE GO DOWN AND WE GO DEEPER
DEEPER INTO HELL

IF I COULD GET YOU SOMETHING ELSE TO EAT, I WOULD, BABY, YOU KNOW I WOULD...
SO GO ON EAT IT EAT IT ALL DOWN FOR MOMMY
CLEVER DARLING CLEVER BABY YOU'RE ALL SO CLEVER
HELLO
I WANTED TO ASK FOR YOUR HELP.
DO YOU REMEMBER PHIL SYLVIAN?
PHIL? OH SURE
AT COLLEGE LONG TIME AGO YOU'RE ONE OF HIS HYBRIDS, AREN'T YOU?

GODDAMN IT, I BET THE CRAZY LITTLE SONUVABITCH THOUGHT HE'D PULLED IT OFF!
[redacted]
HAVE YOU SEEN MY BABIES? THEY'RE HYBRID TOO. LITTLE DARLINGS AND SOOO CLEVER
IT'S HARD TO GET THE MATERIALS DOWN HERE, THOUGH. AFTER LAST TIME THEY DON'T LIKE TO LET ME OUT, SO NOW IT'S MAINLY ROACHES AND MOSS.
YOU SAY YOU KNOW WHAT I AM?
BETTER THAN YOU DO, LITTLE MAY QUEEN
AND YOU WERE PHIL'S [redacted]
FRIEND? HEH, NO
WE TOOK THE SAME CLASSES AT COLLEGE
IF I SMILED AT HIM HE'D CRAWL DOWN A SEWER FOR ME. SMART LITTLE DUMB LITTLE GUY.
WOODRUE WAS OUR PROFESSOR. HE HADN'T BEEN THERE LONG, AND HE WAS WORKING FOR HIS DOCTORATE, TEACHING IN HIS SPARE TIME.
ME, PHIL, ALEC HOLLAND AND HIS GIRLFRIEND, WHATSERNAME, WE WERE THE PLANT WIZARDS. THEY WANTED TO FEED THE WORLD. I WANTED...
JESUS IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO
PHIL'S DEAD THEY KILLED HIM LAST NIGHT
IT HAPPENS
HOLLAND'S BEEN DEAD FOR YEARS. SO WHAT?
THERE WERE MORE LIKE ME. THEY'RE DEAD AS WELL THERE ARE JUST TWO OF US LEFT
MM THERE YOU GO
I CAME TO YOU BECAUSE I NEED ANSWERS. WHAT AM I? WHO AM I? ARE THERE MORE LIKE ME?
I HAVE A SMATTERING OF A DEAD WOMAN'S MEMORIES. I'M NOT HUMAN. I'M NOT EVEN ANIMAL
DO YOU REALLY KNOW WHAT I AM?
WILL YOU HELP ME?

DON'T YOU THINK MY BABIES ARE BEAUTIFUL? MY PRETTY ONES
I DON'T LIKE THEM.
NO. MOST PEOPLE DON'T. THEY ONLY LET ME MAKE MY PETS FOR "THERAPY." I FEEL BETTER WITH THEM SAFER
ONE OF THE NURSING ASSISTANTS WENT MAD. SHE SAID THEY SCARED HER. THAT THEY DIDN'T LIKE HER. THAT THEY GAVE HER NIGHTMARES..
PATHETIC
TO HELP ME,
I HAVEN'T SEEN SUNLIGHT FOR THREE WEEKS. THIS BUILDING STINKS OF MADNESS AND URINE. NOBODY COMES TO SEE ME. NOBODY PHONES
NO ROMANCE
THE ONLY REASON I HAVEN'T BEEN RAPED BY THE GUARDS IS THAT THEY'RE SCARED OF ME. SCARED OF MY PLANTS
SCARED OF MY POWER
THIS PLACE ISN'T A PRISON. THERE'S NO RELEASE DATE. NO PAROLE. SOME SWEATY, OVER-WEIGHT CREEP ASKS YOU TO GO DOWN ON HIM TO PROVE YOU'RE FIT TO MINGLE WITH SOCIETY...
WHEN YOU'RE SCARED ENOUGH--OR HURT ENOUGH--TO BE QUIET, TO BE "GOOD"...
THEN THEY'LL LET YOU OUT. OR MAYBE THEY WON'T. AND NOBODY GIVES A DAMN
YOU WANT ME TO HELP YOU?
IF I COULD BE ANYTHING IN THE WORLD, MISS HYBRID, I'D BE YOU. AND YOU'RE COMPLAINING?
I NEVER GOT ANY BREAKS, YOU KNOW. I SCREWED UP MY LIFE ON MY OWN, WITH NO HELP ON THE WAY DOWN FROM ANYBODY ELSE

YOU CAN DAMN WELL DO THE SAME
GET OUT OF HERE
YOU'RE IN PAIN, AREN'T YOU? YOU HURT INSIDE I'LL LEAVE NOW
SO S-SOMEBODY KILLED YOU, HUH? CHRIST. S-SMART LITTLE SNIF D-DUMB LITTLE GUY I'M S-SORRY, PHIL
AW... SHIT!
SHE WOULDN'T HELP, HUH? DON'T LET IT GET YOU DOWN THAT'S WHY FOR YOU NO FEELINGS ICE ALL THROUGH HEART OF GLASS
I USED TO BRING HER THINGS TO MAKE HER PETS WITH A DEAD RABBIT TOADSTOOLS, SOME TREE BARK DID I EVER GET A THANK-YOU?
I DID NOT
I BELIEVE IN HELPING PEOPLE WE WERE ALL PUT HERE FOR A PURPOSE, I SAY BUT IT'S STILL NICE TO GET A THANK-YOU MAYBE A PRESENT
SOME FELT, OR RIBBONS NEEDLES DIODES TOP HAT DERBY STOVEPIPE. UHN
THIS IS AS FAR AS I CAN TAKE YOU THE GUARDS WILL GET YOU THE REST OF THE WAY
YOU'VE BEEN REALLY HELPFUL. THANK YOU I'VE GOT A PRESENT FOR YOU. NOTHING BIG, BUT...
A FLOWER?
FOR ME?
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE...
DEEVER! DUMFREY! LOOK WHAT I GOT!
SHE GAVE ME A FLOWER.
HEY! I GOT A FLOWER!

I HOPE YOU GOT WHAT YOU WANTED.
..ONE EIGHTY-- ONE-NINETY -- TWO GRAND ON THE NAIL
THANK YOU, YOUNG FELLOW IT'LL SURE GO DOWN WELL
YEAH, YEAH, POPS. DON'T WAVE IT AROUND OR IT WON'T LAST LONG NOW AMSCRAY
HEY! JIMMY! MERCHANDISE ALL FASTENED DOWN?
SAFE AND SECURE, BOSS LET'S TAKE OFF --
-- WE GOT WHAT WE CAME FOR

ALEC HOLLAND?
SHE WAS NO HELP WOODRUE'S GONE HOLLAND'S DEAD THERE'S JUST NO--
NO. I DIDN'T
UH-HUH HIM
WHAT IS IT YOU NEED? EXACTLY?
I-- WELL, THE ONE WHO OPPOSED CRIME I'M NOT HER SHE WAS MY SISTER
THEY KILLED HER.
WE-- WE'RE PLANT WOMEN THAT MUCH I KNOW BUT WHAT WE ARE, WHY WE ARE
I AM SURE YOUR SISTER DIED A SOLDIER IN THE CRUSADE FOR JUSTICE. THERE IS NOTHING NOBLER.
HMMM.
I WOULD SUGGEST THAT YOU TALK TO ALEC HOLLAND.
ALEC HOLLAND IS DEAD! HE DIED YEARS AGO EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT!
MOST OF THE THINGS THAT "EVERYBODY KNOWS" ARE WRONG. THE REST ARE MERELY UNRELIABLE.
GO TO LOUISIANA, TO THE BAYOU COUNTRY. YOU'LL FIND HIM. IF HE WANTS YOU TO FIND HIM, YOU'LL FIND HIM.

YOU KNOW ALEC HOLLAND?
YES. NOT WELL.
WHAT'S HE LIKE?
HE'S... UNUSUAL.
GOOD LUCK, BLACK ORCHID. I TRUST YOU TOO WILL BECOME A CRIME-FIGHTER. THERE ARE TOO FEW OF US...
AND FAR TOO MANY OF THEM.
..ONLY TAKING BACK ROADS THEY HAVE AN E.T.A. AT THE LABS OF SIXTEEN HOURS, SIR
I HAVE NEVER BEEN GOOD AT WAITING, SANDRA
I WANT EVERYTHING, AND I WANT IT NOW.
WHEN WILL I GET THE FIRST LAB REPORT?
JUST AS SOON AS WE'VE COMPLETED THE NITIAL DISSECTION TOMORROW NIGHT
MAKE SURE IT IS. THOSE FLOWERS ARE IMPORTANT. AND WHO OWNS IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES, SANDRA?
LEXCORP SIR. YOU DO
EXACTLY.

SUZY?
SO WHAT I FIGURE IS, SOME OF YOU I SELL THE REST I USE...
THERE ARE PEOPLE I WANT YOU GUYS TO MEET.
LEX LUTHOR YOU GOTTA MEET LEX...
AND YOU GOTTA MEET THE GUYS WHO PUT CARL IN THE RIVER
AND YOU KNOW WHO YOU REALLY GOTTA MEET?
THE PURPLE CHICKS THE ONES WHO PULLED ME OUT OF THE WATER YOU GOTTA MEET THEM I MEAN I DON'T KNOW IF THEY'RE SUSAN OR WHAT..
BUT THEY'RE ALL HEADING FOR A BIG FALL RIGHT?
RIGHT

GONE
LOST
I SHOULD NEVER HAVE LEFT HER
SUZY?
JUST ECHOES
SUZY??
STARING DOWN AT THIS CITY. HOW COULD I HAVE LEFT HER ON HER OWN?
STUPID
I'LL FIND YOU, SUZY
BECAUSE I LOVE YOU
BECAUSE I CARE
BECAUSE I COULDN'T STAND TO BE ALONE
SUU-ZY!!
WHAT WAS THAT?
I DIDN'T HEAR NOTHIN' YOU WANNA PUT ON A TAPE?
YOU KIDDING? YOU ONLY GOT THAT COUNTRY AND WESTERN CRAP
"YEE EW BEROKE MAH HEART AN THEREW IT IN THE TE ERRASHH CAYANNN."
BUT THAT'S WHY I LIKE COUNTRY, MAN. IT'S FOR REAL. PEOPLE FEEL LIKE THAT.
HASN'T YOUR HEART EVER BEEN BROKEN? HAVEN'T YOU EVER LOST SOMEONE YOU REALLY LOVED?
NOPE. CAN'T SAY I EVER HAVE
C'MON. WE GOTTA BE DOWN AT THE LABS BY MIDDAY TOMORROW. I'M FALLING ASLEEP
Say it with Flowers
WAKE ME UP WHEN IT'S MY TURN TO DRIVE

KEEP GOING. MUST KEEP GOING
I'VE FAILED YOU, SUZY... PHIL...
HURTS TOO FAST TOO LONG

TIRED. IF I COULD JUST.
GOT TO KEEP GOING--
CAN'T KEEP THIS UP...
NO USE...

F
AL

THE RETURN TO CONSCIOUSNESS IS HARD.
THERE'S A KNOT OF DISCONTENT INSIDE ME, A PAIN WITHOUT A NAME.
I FEEL THE DARK WATERS OF THE SWAMP AROUND ME,
FEEDING ME,
PROTECTING ME,
AND UNWILLINGLY I RISE TOWARD THE SURFACE OF MY MIND
THE SWAMP WHISPERS INSIDE ME IT KNOWS I'M HERE
WAKING...

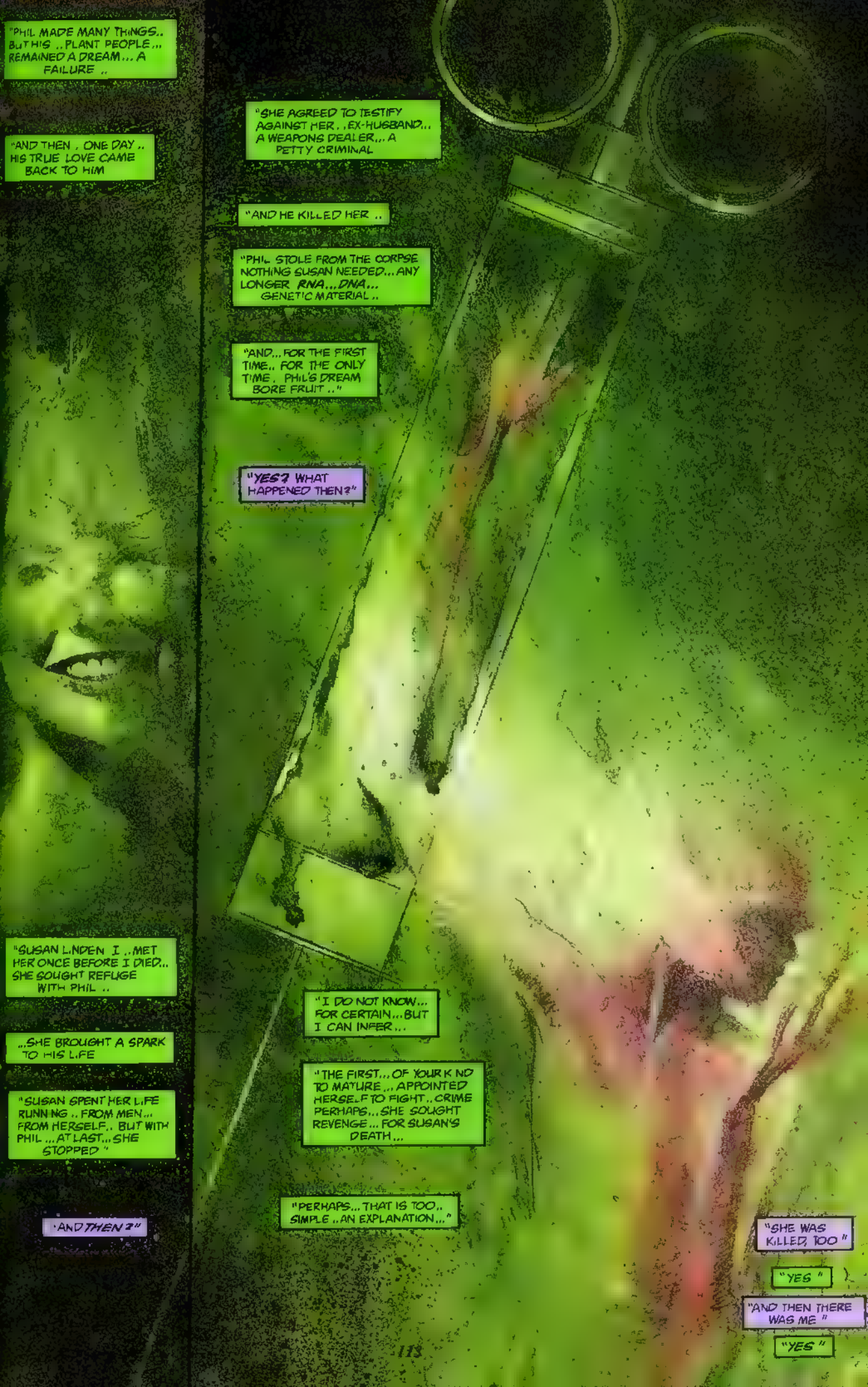
YES
THE BAYOUS GO ON FOREVER
AND I REALIZE THE FOOLISHNESS OF MY JOURNEY- I HAVE COME HERE LOOKING FOR A MAN I KNOW IS DEAD...

LOOKING FOR THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD HELP ME
ALEC HOLLAND. WHO ARE YOU? HOW WILL I FIND YOU?
WHAT CAN YOU SAY TO ME IF I DO?
HELLO

I'VE NEVER MET A GOD BEFORE
HE'S BEAUTIFUL.
HELLO.
YOU
IT'S YOU!
YOU'RE THE [redacted] LOOKING FOR I DIDN'T KNOW [redacted] THIS..
HOW DID YOU FIND ME?
HOW DID YOU KNOW?
I...KNEW
THIS IS SO WEIRD. I'M SORRY IT'S JUST BEEN SO HARD...
THEY KILLED PHIL AND MY SISTERS EXCEPT FOR SUZY, AND SHE'S JUST A BABY...
AND I THINK THEY SNATCHED SUZY, BECAUSE WHEN I WENT BACK SHE WASN'T THERE NOT [redacted].
AND PAMELA ISLEY WOULDN'T HELP ME AND WOODRUE WASN'T THERE.

AND I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD, BUT THE MASKED MAN SAID YOU WERE HERE, AND I DIDN'T KNOW WHERE ELSE TO GO...
AND I'M HERE AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT I AM AND I DON'T LIKE IT AND, AND, IT'S...
...NOT FAIR.
HUSH..
HE SLIDES INTO MY MIND LIKE A SILVER FISH, AND THEN HE CATCHES MY SIMILE AND IS AMUSED...
WE ARE TOGETHER IN A NEW WORLD I HAVE NO WORD FOR IT
THE GREEN HE TELLS ME HE CALLS IT THE GREEN
I FEEL HIM READING THE TRACERIES THAT OTHER LIVES HAVE LEFT UPON MY CELL SPIRALS.
AND, REFLECTED IN A GREEN MIRROR, I SEE HIM INSPECTING OLD MEMORIES...
BORROWED AND LONG ABANDONED ..

"LISTEN... I WILL TELL YOU. A STORY
"ONCE ON A TIME, THERE WERE TWO... BOYS . WHO THOUGHT THEY KNEW EVERYTHING THEY SAW WHAT MAN WAS DOING TO HIS WORLD
"ALEC . AND HIS LOVE. MADE A. MAGIC POTION. AND THEY WERE KILLED BECAUSE OF IT.
"ALEC... AND PHIL
"ALEC DREAMED OF FERTILE DESERTS... OF FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY...
"PHIL DREAMED OF AIR... HE DREAMED OF SHOWING MANKIND THAT THE WORLD WAS ONE THING . ALL CONNECTED, INTERTWINED
"PHIL WANTED TO MAKE PEOPLE OF PLANTS . BREATHING IN CARBON DIOXIDE BREATHING OUT OXYGEN . FEEDING ON WATER AND SOIL AND AIR
HE HAD DREAMS OF SENDING THEM TO THE AMAZON. . TO THE RAIN FORESTS... TO CREATE A NEW WORLD . TO SAVE AN OLD WORLD FROM DYING
"BUT YOU -- YOU WERE ALEC! HOW ?"
"HUSH .. THAT IS ANOTHER STORY

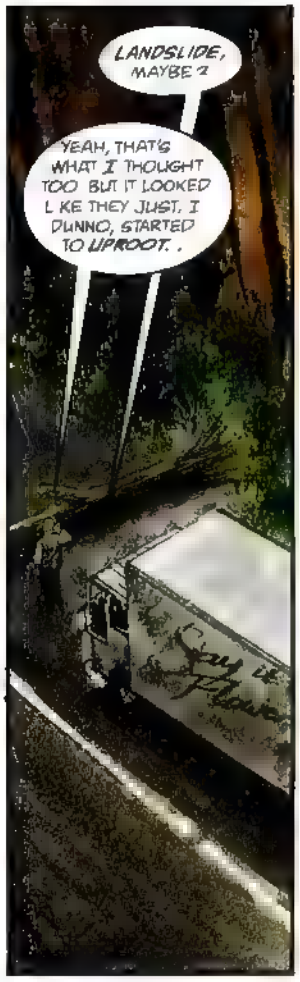

"PHIL MADE MANY THINGS.. BUT HIS .. PLANT PEOPLE ... REMAINED A DREAM ... A FAILURE ..
"AND THEN , ONE DAY .. HIS TRUE LOVE CAME BACK TO HIM
"SHE AGREED TO TESTIFY AGAINST HER . . EX-HUSBAND... A WEAPONS DEALER... A PETTY CRIMINAL
"AND HE KILLED HER ..
"PHIL STOLE FROM THE CORPSE NOTHING SUSAN NEEDED... ANY LONGER RNA... DNA... GENETIC MATERIAL ..
"AND... FOR THE FIRST TIME.. FOR THE ONLY TIME . PHIL'S DREAM BORE FRUIT .."
"YES? WHAT HAPPENED THEN?"
"SUSAN LINDEN I .. MET HER ONCE BEFORE I DIED.. SHE SOUGHT REFUGE WITH PHIL ..
..SHE BROUGHT A SPARK TO HIS LIFE
"SUSAN SPENT HER LIFE RUNNING .. FROM MEN ... FROM HERSELF.. BUT WITH PHIL ... AT LAST.. SHE STOPPED "
"AND THEN ?"
"I DO NOT KNOW... FOR CERTAIN... BUT I CAN INFER...
"THE FIRST... OF YOUR KIND TO MATURE ... APPOINTED HERSELF TO FIGHT .. CRIME PERHAPS... SHE SOUGHT REVENGE ... FOR SUSAN'S DEATH ...
"PERHAPS... THAT IS TOO.. SIMPLE .. AN EXPLANATION ..."
"SHE WAS KILLED, TOO "
"YES "
"AND THEN THERE WAS ME "
"YES "

I WANT TO FIND SUZY TO GET HER BACK...
I WANT--
I KNOW...SOME THINGS...OTHERS I ..SUSPECT
I KNOW TOO LITTLE OF... MAY QUEENS
HOW THE STORY ENDS...? THAT IS YOUR AFFAIR
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
SO.
HOW DOES THE STORY END?
YOU KNOW WHAT I WANT. YOU HAVE SEEN INTO MY MIND. YOU KNOW MY NEEDS.
YES.
VERY WELL...I ..CAN FIND... SUZY FOR YOU SHE IS A PLANT... AFTER ALL...
...IF SHE IS STILL ALIVE
AND WHY DID PHIL'S PROCESS ONLY WORK WITH SUSAN? AND WHAT HAPPENS NOW?
AS FOR .. THE OTHER MATTER...
I BELIEVE.. THIS WILL WORK...

SOW THESE SEEDS YOU... W'LL BEST.. KNOW WHERE
I...
NOW THE LITTLE SISTER...
THERE YOU SEE?
YES
I--I CAN NEVER THANK YOU ENOUGH
BUT THANK YOU.
ALEC? WHO WAS THAT?
SHE WAS... IS... AN OLD FRIEND..OF AN OLD FRIEND
I WAS GIVING HER... BABIES
UM RIGHT
Y'KNOW, ALEC I, UM, I THINK WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO HAVE A TALK ABOUT THIS

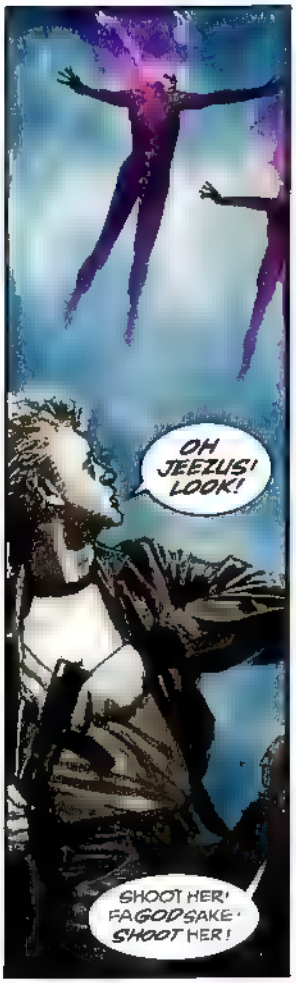
A CIGARETTE THAT BEARS A LIPSTICK TRACES.
AN AIRLINE TICKET TO ROMANTIC PLACES.
YEAH, I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING YOU'RE THINKING I HATE YOU RIGHT?
WELL YOU'RE WRONG I DIDN'T KILL YOU BECAUSE I HATE YOU
I LOVE YOU
WHAT DRIVES ME CRAZY IS THINKING ABOUT YOU YOU WITH OTHER GUYS YOU LEAVING ME
THAT WAS WHY I HAD TA TAKE YOU OUT THE FIRST TIME
MY HEART HAS WINGS, THESE FOOLISH THINGS
WHEN YOU WERE GONE I WAS HAPPY -UNLESS I THOUGHT ABOUT YOU
YOU CAME, YOU SAW, YOU CONQUERED ME.
I GOTTA KEEP DOING IT I GOTTA FORGET YOU HONEY THAT'S WHY THESE FLOWER BITCHES HAVE TO BE TAKEN OUT AS WELL
BECAUSE I LOVE YOU AND IT'S GONNA DRIVE ME NUTS
OOOHHH HOW THE GHOST OF YOU CLINGS.
...THESE FOOLISH THINGS REMIND ME OF YOU...

NO WAY I DON'T BELIEVE THIS
I MEAN, WHERE WAS THE HURRICANE?


LANDSLIDE, MAYBE?
YEAH, THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT TOO BUT IT LOOKED L KE THEY JUST, I DUNNO, STARTED TO UPROOT. .

"MOTHER?"
MAYBE IF I WALK BACK TO THE DINER, THEY GOT A CHAINSAW OR AN AX THEY COULD LOAN US
YEAH GOOD IDEA YOU WANNA BRING BACK SOME COFFEE?

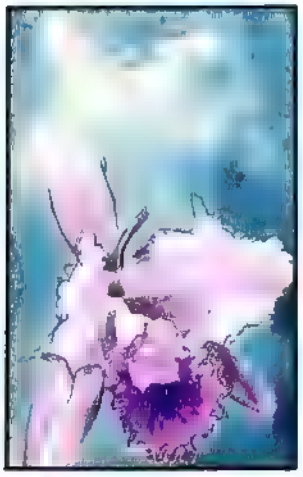
"YES"
HEY, I JUST HEARD SOMETHING. ARE THERE, UH MOUNTA N LIONS ROUND HERE?


OH JEEZUS! LOOK!
SHOOT HER! FAGODSAKE SHOOT HER!

WHAT DO YOU THINK I'M DOING?

I WAS SCARED I WOKE UP IN THE DARK, AND I COULDN'T MOVE
I'M SORRY I WON'T LEAVE YOU AGAIN
WHERE ARE WE GOING NOW?

SOUTH



HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN?

TWO WEEKS, SIR
EIGHTEEN DAYS MISTER STERLING NOT TWO WEEKS
EIGHTEEN DAYS!
LOOK, I CAN'T SEE WHAT THE PROBLEM IS-- AFTER ALL--

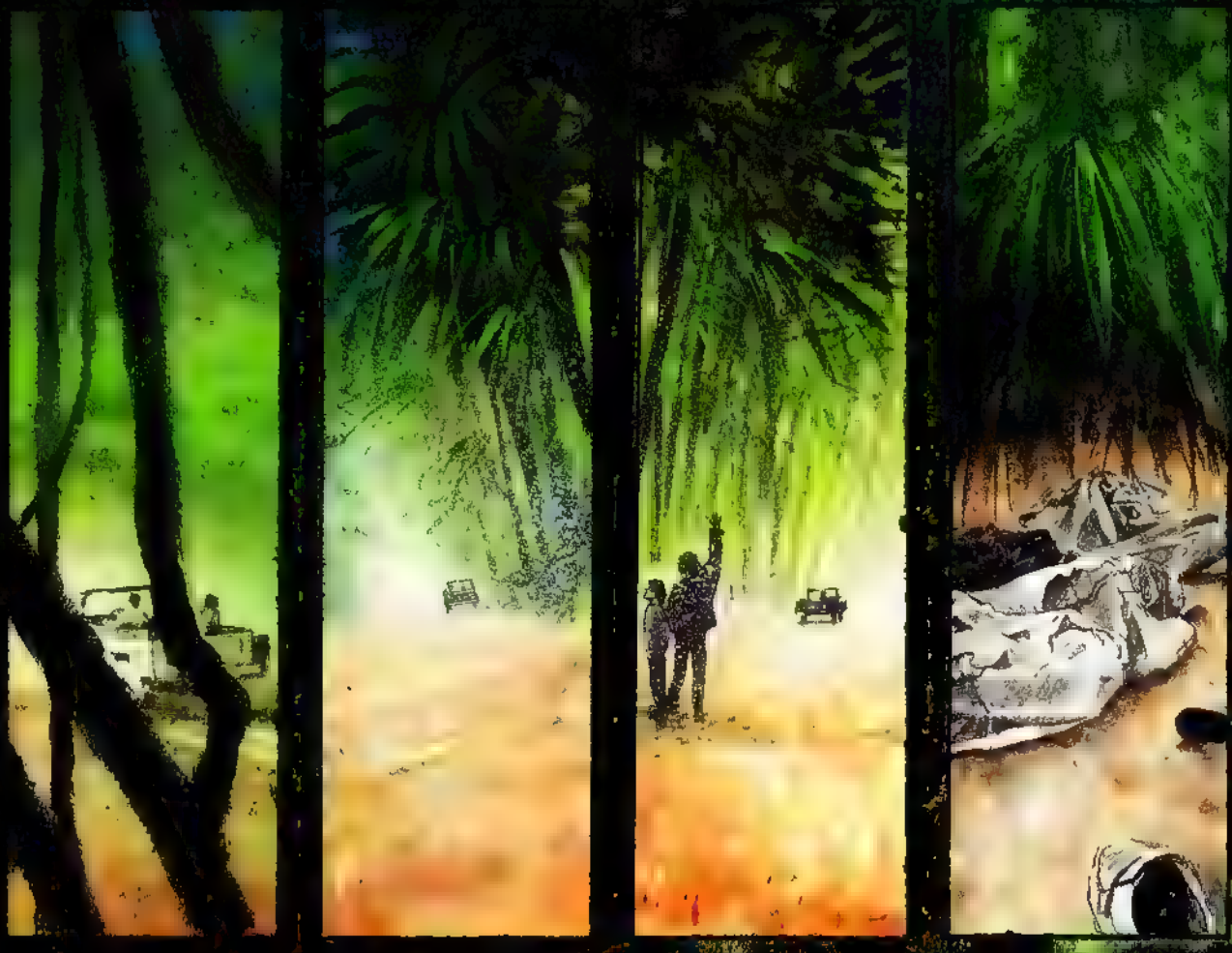
QUIET!
I WANT THOSE WOMEN
YOU KNOW THAT I ONLY ASK ONE THING OF PEOPLE WHO WORK FOR ME, STERLING
WHAT AM I TALKING ABOUT?

RESULTS
REEESULTS. YES SO
FIND ME THESE SUPER-PURPLE-FLOWER-WOMEN ONE OR BOTH AND GET THEM TO THE LABS FOR EXAMINATION AND DISSECTION
YES?

SIR, IT'S .. NOT THAT EASY, I'M UP TO MY NECK WITH THE ALBION PROJECT, AND I VE--

I OBVIOUSLY HAVEN'T MADE MYSELF CLEAR YOU ARE SUSPENDED FROM YOUR POSITION

I'LL REASSIGN MCGRATH TO ALBION. YOU ARE FULL-TIME ON THIS PROJECT UNTIL I SEE RESULTS
AND I WILL SEE RESULTS
WON'T I ?
YES SR
999


YES
THIS IS THE PLACE
THIS IS LIFE
THIS IS HOME

SUZY?
SHUSH! I'M TALKING TO MY FRIEND
TUH-HA HA HA. HMM CUTE!
I'M SORRY
WHERE'S YOUR FRIEND?
SHE HAD TO GO BACK TO HER HOUSE
SUZYYY! DON'T SPLASH!

I'M TIRED, MOMMY
WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR SO LONG NOW. CAN'T WE REST?
PLEASE?
YES. ALL RIGHT
I KNOW THE PLACE MUST BE HERE SOMEWHERE...
SOMEWHERE SAFE... SOMEWHERE WE CAN BE ALONE
BUT I JUST DON'T KNOW WHERE
EEEK!
UH. HELLO. CAN YOU HELP US?
WE'RE LOST

YEAH. ALL OF THEM. I THINK VANDERVOORT'S IS FINAL ID..
HOW MANY SIGHTINGS?
I THINK WE CAN IGNORE, YEAH BUT DON'T YOU
I'D SAY IT'S CERTAIN-- VANDERVOORT, THE HUNTER, HE'S WORKED FOR US BEFORE HE'S RELIABLE
NOW, I NEED A SQUAD OF EXPERIENCED FIELD STAFF WE'RE ACTIVATING PROJECT FLOWER...
SURE THE PRINCIPAL HAS AUTHORIZED IT, CARSON
NO PROBLEM AND I WANT A PLANE. UHUH BRAZIL YEAH YOU TOO
THAT GUY IS SUCH A JERK!
UH
HELLO? MISTER LUTHOR, IT'S STERLING YES IT LOOKS LIKE WE'VE TRACKED THEM DOWN TO BRAZIL
YES SIR-- HAHAHAHA OH, "WHERE THE NUTS COME FROM" THAT'S REALLY FUNNY...
I'LL BE SENDING N A TEN-MAN RETRIEVAL TEAM TO MANAUS, AND ACTIVATING THE LOCAL NETWORK
ME? YOU WANT ME TO GO WITH THEM?
BUT SIR, I-- BUT-
YES
YES I UNDERSTAND, SIR YES YOU TOO
HEY HILDIE, YOU HEAR THAT, HUH? YOU HEAR THAT? YEAH HE'S SENDING ME OUT THERE TOO!
SONUVABITCH!
HMM
RETURN I WILL TO OLD.. BRA-ZEEEL

YES
THIS IS THE PLACE
I THINK PERHAPS I DREAMED OF THIS VALLEY...
..WHEN I WAS SOMEONE ELSE...
A LONG TIME AGO

I'M SCARED, SUZY WE CAME HERE TO MAKE PHIL'S DREAM COME TRUE, AND NOW THAT WE'RE HERE...
I KNOW I FEEL IT TOO
THERE'S A FEELING OF ANTICLIMAX
AS IF A QUEST I NEVER KNEW THAT I WAS ON HAS COME TO AN END...
I AM MORE ALIVE THAN ANYWHERE, AND I HOLD IN MY HAND A MYSTERY, A MIRACLE...
EACH SEED IS POTENTIAL EACH IS, UNIMAGINABLY, POSSIBLY ALIVE IN SUNLIGHT AND DREAMS ..
CHILDREN OF DUST, WAITING FOR RELEASE
YES
PHIL, 2 THIS IS FOR YOU
BE FRUITFUL

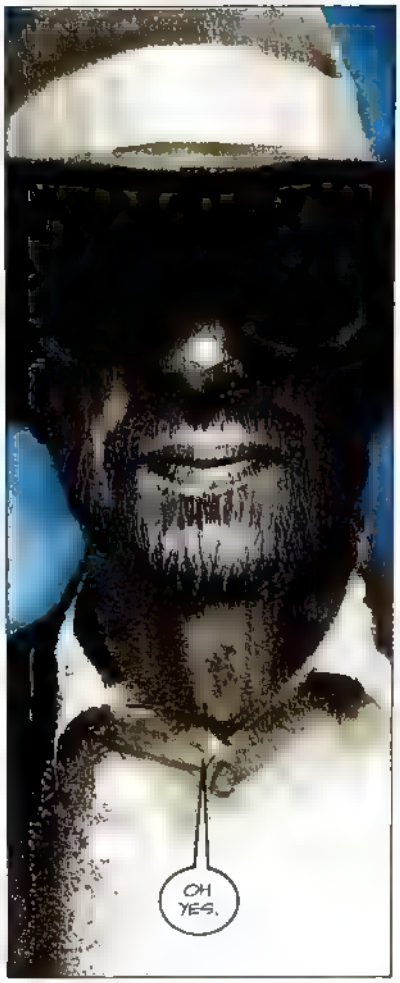
"FIVE MINUTES TO LANDING. MAKE SURE YOU HAVE EVERYTHING WITH YOU!"
"YOU KNOW, REALLY, I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO GO TO THE AMAZON RAINFOREST. REALLY. IT'S ALWAYS BEEN A HOBBY OF MINE."
"SHUT UP, BRAD."
"DICK, YOU KNOW YOUR TROUBLE? YOU'RE A GROUCH. IT'S ALWAYS 'SHUT UP' THIS, AND 'SHUT UP' THAT."
"SHUT UP, BRAD."
"THREE MINUTES TO LANDING! WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO BE OFF THE PLANE AT SPEED, SO MAKE SURE YOU'RE ALL SET TO UNLOAD!"

HI YOU'RE VANDERVOORT
YES

I'M STERLING. I KNOW IT'S GOING TO BE GREAT WORKING TOGETHER ON THIS PROJECT
HEYYY! CAREFUL WITH THE STUFF, YOU GUYS! AND GET A MOVE ON!

I DON'T MIND TELLING YOU THAT THIS IS A VERY SEXY PROGRAM AS THE PRINCIPAL AND I SEE IT, FAILURE IS UNTENABLE
YOU GET ME?
IF WE DON'T INTERFACE WITH THESE PURPLE LADIES-- WELL, IT WON'T BE DAYS OF SNOW AND ROSES, YEAH?

WE WILL FIND THEM WON'T WE?


OH YES.

YEAH YEAH OF COURSE WE WILL COME OVER HERE, LEMME INTRODUCE YOU TO THE GANG GREAT BUNCHA GUYS
HEYYYY! FOR CHRISSAKE BE CAREFUL WITH THAT STUFF! BREATHE TOO MUCH OF THAT AND YOUR CHILDREN GET BORN W TH TWO HEADS

COME ON YOU GUYS! KEEP MOVING - AND KEEP QUIET!
LET'S TAKE IT NICE N' EASY . IT'S GONNA BE SO EASY ..

SO I SAID, SNAKES? HE SAYS, YES--
CAN'T BELIEVE WE'RE EATING THIS STUFF.
BACK IN METROPOLIS RIGHT NOW THEY'RE PROBABLY -
GODDAMN GODDAMN GODDAMN
. THE INTERESTING THING IS YOU'D THINK IT WOULD BE REALLY FERTILE, BUT IT'S NOT. IT'S THE OLDEST PLACE IN THE WORLD, SO ALL THE SOIL NUTRIENTS --
OH, SHUT UP, BRAD
NO, REALLY, THERE ARE MORE SPECIES PER SQUARE MILE HERE THAN ANYWHERE ELSE ON EARTH
MR STERLING, I DON'T THINK WE'LL MEET ANY MANEATERS

ENOUGH ASK HIM AGAIN.
WHERE FLOWER WOMEN? TALK OR YOU WILL BE KILLED
I DO NOT KNOW ANYTHING
I SPOKE TO A HUNTER WHO SAID THEY PASSED ABOVE HIM BUT HE AVERTED HIS EYES
THEY ARE VERY HOLY

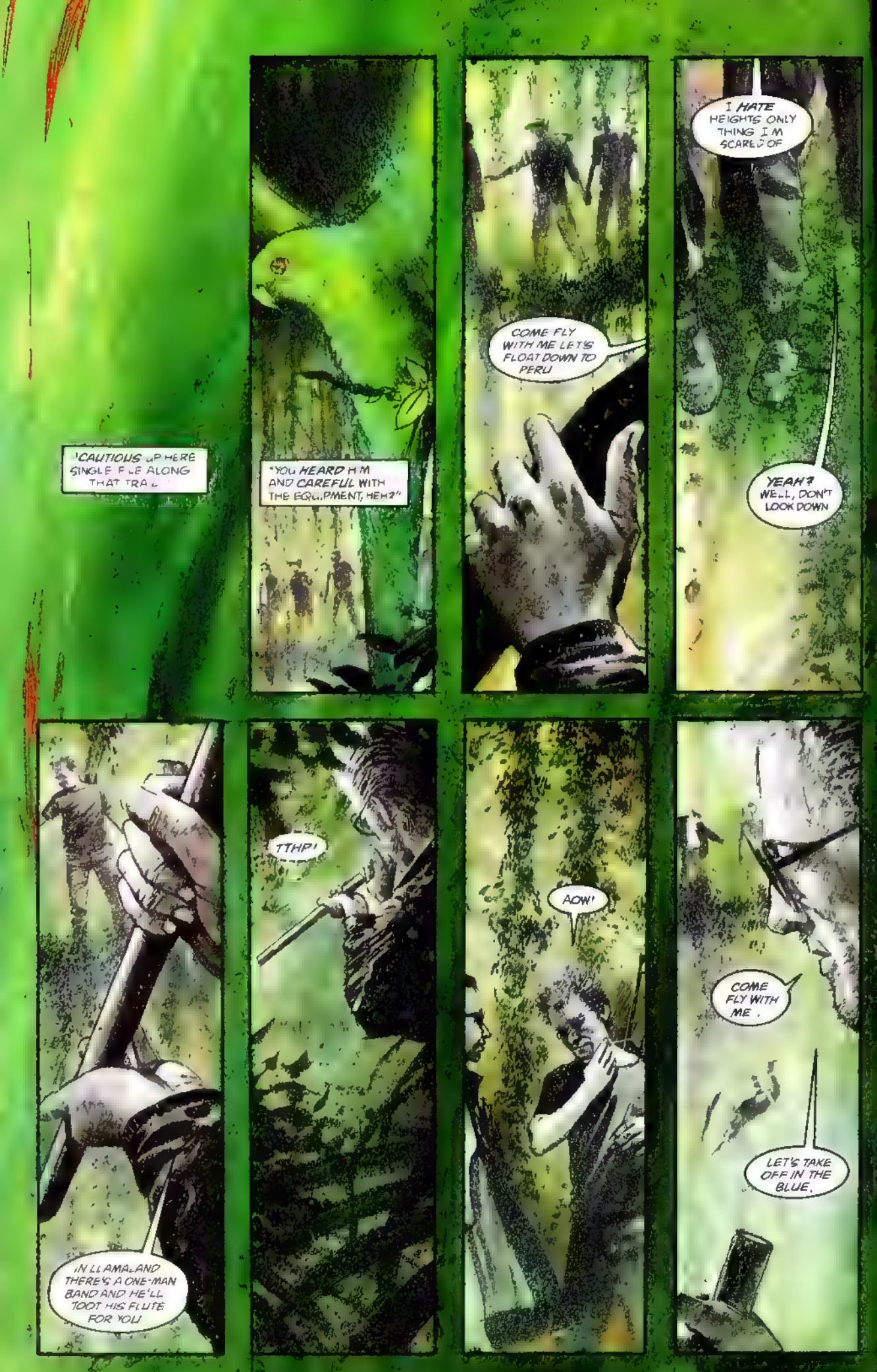
IF HE KNOWS ANYTHING HE WILL NOT TELL ME
TCH! JEEZ
OK KILL HIM
YESSSS GOOD WORK, BARRY
NOW LETS ASK ANOTHER, HUH?
AND THIS TIME, NO NEED TO BE QUITE SO GENTLE

SUZY?
YEAH! OVER HERE IN THE WATER.
I'M PLAYING WITH THE TURTLE HE'S NEAT HE SAYS I'D MAKE A GOOD TURTLE
SUZY... UH, DO YOU REALLY TALK TO THE TURTLE, OR DO YOU, UH.
SILLY! I TALK TO YOU, DON'T I?
CATCH ME!
DRIFTING THROUGH THE COOL UNDERWATER TWILIGHT, FOLLOWING A CHILD..
WHO SINGS FOREVER OF YES OF LIVING THINGS OF GREEN IN THE SUNLIGHT IN THE YOUNG...
SO GLAD AND QUIET AND STILL DIVING THROUGH THE HEART OF THE WORLD...
FAR FROM CRUELTY
FAR FROM VIOLENCE..
...AND FROM SUDDEN, POINTLESS DEATH

STOP AND THINK ABOUT IT, REALLY AND IT'S A REALLY COMPLICATED ECOSYSTEM
TAKE THE SOIL IT'S GOT ALMOST NO NUTRITIVE ELEMENTS IN IT SO WHAT HAPPENS? YOU GET A SYMBIOTIC SET UP BETWEEN THE TREES
CAN WE TRUST HIM THOUGH?
YES
YOU'RE SO SURE.
IT TOOK LONG ENOUGH TO FIND ONE WHO WOULD TALK
THEY ARE ANIMALS...
BUT DOES HE KNOW WHERE THEY ARE?
SOME TR BE UP NORTH--THE SILENT PEOPLE - THEY GUARD A PLACE SACRED TO THE SPIRIT OF THE FORESTS" KURUPIRA ..
GOTTA TAKE A LEAK
DON'T GO TOO FAR FROM CAMP
STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT EXCHANGING GLANCES
ZAT YOU, PETEY?
SOMETHING IN YOUR EYES, WAS SO INVITING SOMETHING IN YOUR SMILE WAS SO EXCITING
PETEY?
NOPE

LOVE WAS JUST A GLANCE AWAY, A WARM EMBRACING DANCE AWAY
DOO BE DOO BE DOOOO .. TWO LONELY PEOPLE ..
IT TURNED OUT SO RIGHT, FOR STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT
YES THERE ARE OTHERS AT THE SOURCE OF THE TEFE THERE IS A GLADE THEY CLAIM IS HOME TO OLD TREE GODS
YEAH? WHAT'S IT LIKE?
I DON'T KNOW THE NATIVES WOULDN'T LET ME NEAR IT SUPERSTITIOUS SCUM...
I MEAN, REALLY, THEY ESTIMATE THAT THE WHOLE OF THIS FOREST WILL BE GONE IN FIFTY YEARS--
BRAD, DID ANYONE EVER TELL YOU THAT YOU'RE OUTSTANDINGLY BORING?
HAS BARRY COME BACK YET? HE RIPPED OFF MY LIGHTER
NO. HE HASN'T
ANYWAY FIFTY YEARS TO GO -

I NEED SOMETHING TO DO. THIS IS PARADISE BUT
PERHAPS OUR KIND NEED DEATH, SUZY
SUSAN LINDEN GAVE US HER LIFE, JUST AS PAMELA ISLEY GAVE HER LIFE TO THE SPOILED THING IN ARKHAM
I'VE BEEN DOING A LOT OF THINKING
I KNOW I WISH YOU'D FIND SOMETHING SENSIBLE TO DO INSTEAD
WHY DON'T YOU PLAY WITH THE BUTTERFLIES?
SUZY
YES
I DON'T WANT TO PLAY WITH THE BUTTERFLIES
HAH WELL WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO THEN?
I DON'T KNOW I'M SORRY. WE'RE LIVING IN PARADISE
AND I'VE GOT EVERYTHING I EVER WANTED.
AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WANT


"CAUTIOUS UP HERE SINGLE FILE ALONG THAT TRAIL"
"YOU HEARD HIM AND CAREFUL WITH THE EQUIPMENT, HEH?"
COME FLY WITH ME LET'S FLOAT DOWN TO PERU
I HATE HEIGHTS ONLY THING I'M SCARED OF
YEAH? WELL, DON'T LOOK DOWN
IN LLAMALAND THERE'S A ONE-MAN BAND AND HE'LL TOOT HIS FLUTE FOR YOU
TTHP!
AOW!
COME FLY WITH ME.
LET'S TAKE OFF IN THE BLUE.

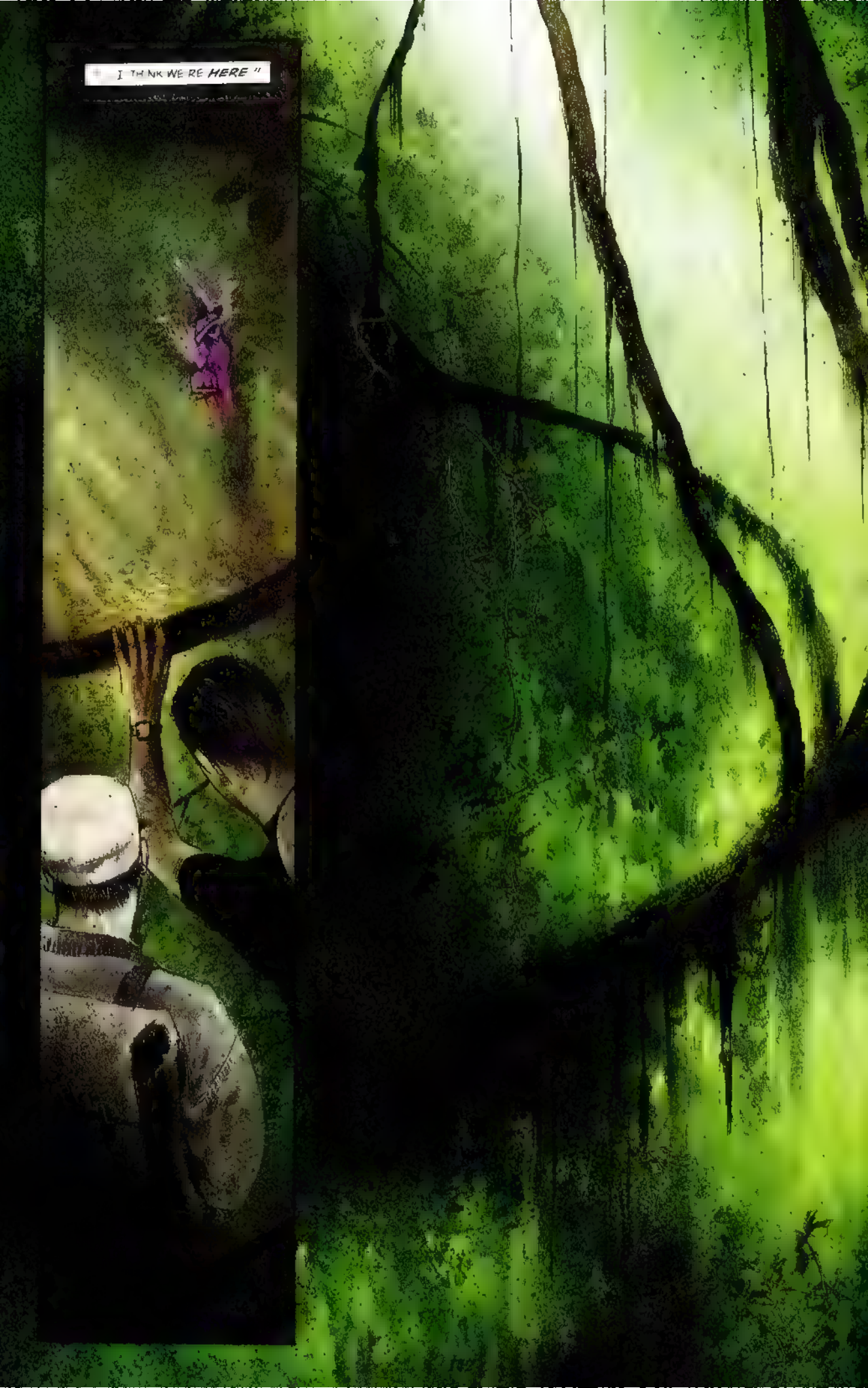
OF COURSE IT'S RAINING
REALLY, LET ME TELL YOU A TRUE FACT THE AMAZON BASIN RECEIVES 12 TRILLION TONS OF RAINWATER EVERY YEAR
12 MILLION MILLION TONS OF RAIN...
SHUT UP, BRAD DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING?
WHAT KIND OF SOMETHING?
SOMEONE SINGING, MAYBE?
NO
YOU HURRY TO A SPOT THAT'S JUST A DOT ON THE MAP
OKAY, IT'S A WILD COUNTRY BUT IT'S SORT OF MAGICAL ISN'T IT?
I MEAN, REALLY, IT WON'T BE HERE FOR VERY MUCH LONGER
IT'S SORT OF SPECIAL...
I SUPPOSE IT IS.
YES. IT IS
AEIII! MAH FOOT! GET IT OFF ME!
YOU'RE HOOKED, YOU'RE COOKED, YOU'RE CAUGHT IN THE TENDER TRAP.

THIS KILLING IS CIVILIZED IT ISN'T THE NATIVES
HEY, YEAH, YOU'RE THE GREAT WHITE TRACKER, BUT, I MEAN, JANOS WAS POISONED.
THAT'S INDIANS
MISTER STERLING, INDIANS DON'T HAVE STEEL MANTRAPS OR GRENADES OR MONOSTRAND TRIPWIRES
OKAY, OKAY SO NO ARGUMENT NOW WHAT?
NOW, I GO INTO THE JUNGLE AND STOP THEM, AND YOUR PRINCIPAL PAYS ME ANOTHER BONUS
HE COULD BUY PIETERMARITZBURG WITH WHAT WE'RE PAYING HIM ALREADY.
LOOK
DON'T SPLIT UP HUH?
WE STAY TOGETHER

I'VE GOT YOU UNDER MY SKIN
I'VE GOT YOU DEEP IN THE HEART OF ME
=GODVERDOMME!=
AND YOU'VE GOT ME UNDER YOUR SKIN

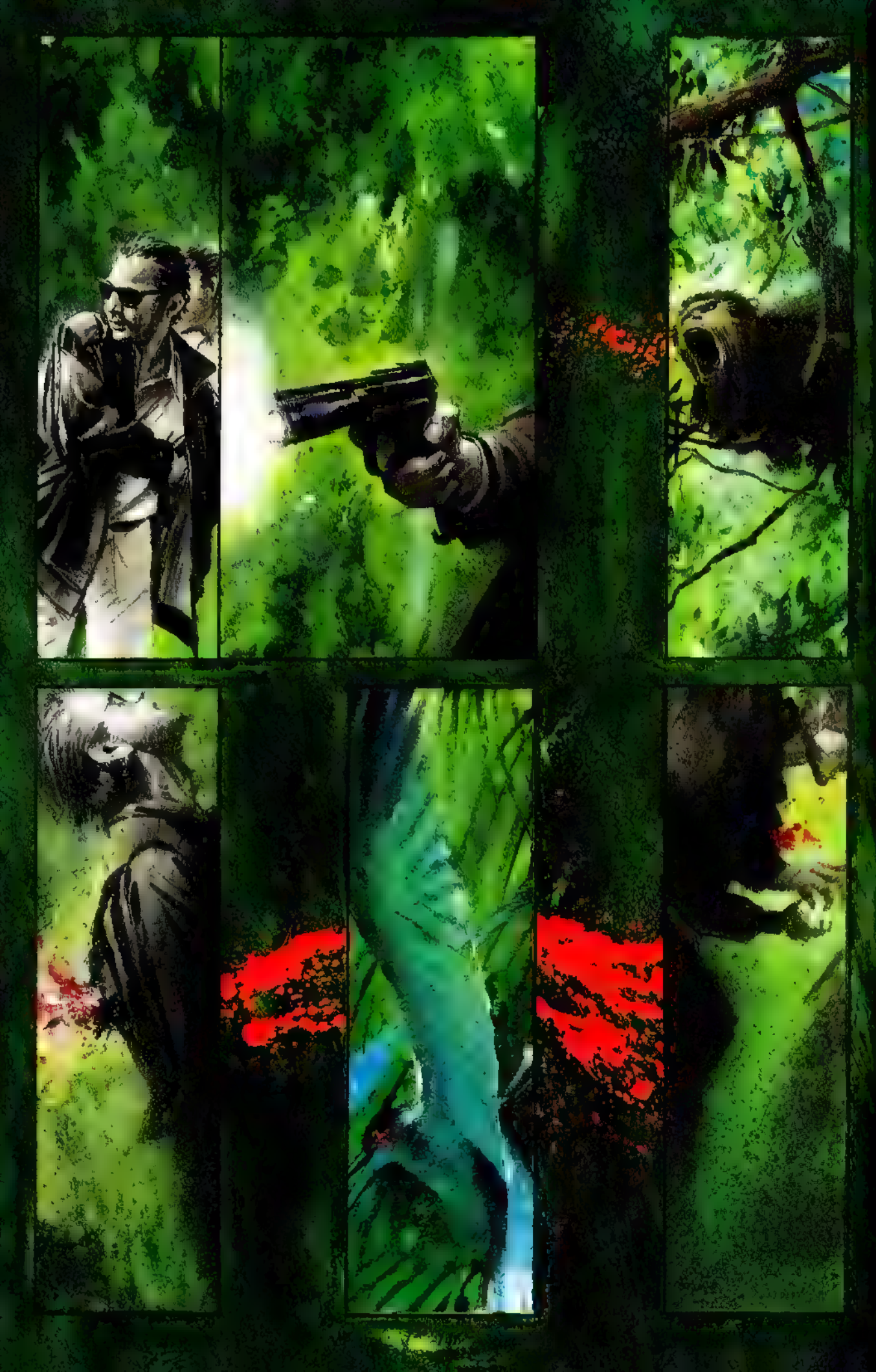
BRAD BRADLEY
PLEASE
YES, I'M SURE, OKAY?
YOU'RE REALLY SURE HE'S TAKING US THE RIGHT WAY SIR?
SHUT UP, BRAD
I'M NOT GOING TO STICK AROUND AND BE A SITTING TARGET FOR ANYONE
WE'VE BEEN GOING ALL NIGHT I'M TIRED I NEED TO REST

WE STICK TOGETHER AWAKE MOVING.
WE GET THE WOMEN. AND WE TAKE THEM BACK HOME.
ANYONE WHO GETS IN OUR WAY... UH.
ANYONE...
DID YOU SEE THAT?
A FRUIT BAT. A BIG ONE
BEAUTIFUL.
WHAT?
YES WOW
SHUT UP, BOTH OF YOU I'M TIRED LET'S KEEP MOVING
SIR... UH...
YES?


I THINK WE'RE HERE "

HEY! LADY!
C'MON DOWN!
HELLO
YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE COME HERE!
SURE WE SHOULD
WE DID... IT WAS EASY!
SO ARE YOU GOING TO COME QUIETLY?
GO AWAY. THIS IS MY PLACE. OUR PLACE. I WILL HAVE NO KILLING HERE.
NO HATE
I HONESTLY DON'T THINK YOU FOLLOW MY DRIFT
MIST-- UH, MY PRINCIPAL WANTS YOU OR THE LITTLE ONE MAYBE BOTH!
YOU'RE GOING TO COME BACK WITH US NOW.

IF YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT CAUSING ANY TROUBLE, ANY TROUBLE THINK AGAIN
UH .. LET'S TALK DEFOLIANT, FLOWER LADY
BRAD HAS A NICE BIG TANK OF THE SHIT ON HIS BACK
AND IF YOU GALS DON'T WANT TO COME ..
WELL, ALL YOUR PRETTY PURPLE FLOWERS GET IT
AND YOU GET IT
AND WE TAKE THE LITTLE ONE BACK TO METROPOLIS ANYWAY
DON'T TRY ANYTHING DUMB AND DON'T EXPECT THE CAVALRY TO COME OVER THE HILL
THERE ISN'T ANY CAVALRY
NOO YAWK NOO YAWK!
IT'S A WUNNERFUL TOOOOWN!
CARL?



Y KNOW.. UHH.
JESUS. THIS STUFF
I DON'T KNOW UHH.
I'LL TELL YOU SOMETHING.

SHE ISN'T REAL WE'VE BEEN RUNN NG THROUGH THE JUNGLE AFTER A CRAZY DREAM.
NONE OF THIG STUFF.
NONE OF IT'S REAL.
SUSAN?
THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS. UH
I'M GOING TO DIE I'M REALLY GOING TO DIE YOU BASTARDS KILLED ME
HHHAHHH
SAY G'BYE TO MISTER LUTHOR FOR ME
YOU AREN'T SUSAN YOU NEVER WERE
YOU AREN'T ANYTHING...
AT LAST .. THE END IS NEAR... AND I HAVE FACED
THE FINAL .
UT

I DON'T BELIEVE IT
CARL
WHERE WERE WE? OH YEAH
SO ARE YOU COMING QUIETLY? OR DO WE DEFOLIATE?
YOU KILLED HIM
I DIDN'T WANT ANY MORE KILLING
NO. I'M NOT COMING WITH YOU SUZY ISN'T COMING EITHER
DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO

OOOOkaaay BR-C SQUIRT THE B*TCH
COME ON KILL HER WE'VE GOT A LONG WAY TO GO.
NO
WHAT?
LOOK AT HER, STERLING
SHE'S PERFECT
SHE'S BEAUTIFUL
I--WE'VE KILLED FOR YOU BEFORE IT'S WHAT WE DO
BUT NOT HER NOT HERE

CAN YOU BURY CARL? BEFORE YOU GO?
YES, MAAM
ARE YOU GUYS CRAZY OR WHAT? LISTEN YOU GONZOS--
SHUT UP, STERLING

NOW GO BACK TO YOUR PRINCIPAL TO MISTER LUTHOR-- AND TELL HIM SOMETHING FROM ME
TELL HIM THIS
"THE GAME IS OVER I'M TIRED OF IT.
"IT'S FOOLISH AND VILE
"TELL HIM THAT IF HE EVER INTERFERES AGAIN WITH ME, OR MY SISTERS, WE WILL RETALIATE
"I WILL RETALIATE"
"SURE. YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S SO DOWN ON VIOLENCE!"
"I DIDN'T MENTION VIOLENCE. BUT IF HE PERSISTS...I WILL FIND WHATEVER IT IS THAT HE LOVES...
"AND I'M SURE THERE IS SOMETHING.
AND I WILL TAKE IT AWAY FROM HIM
"TELL HIM THAT
KILL ME
TELL HIM
"GOODBYE"

MOM
SUZY?
YOU AREN'T HAPPY HERE, ARE YOU? NOT ANY MORE
THE SISTERS ARE GROWING FINE. IT'LL BE YEARS BEFORE THEY'RE PEOPLE
I TALKED TO THE INDIANS
YOU TALKED...?
IT'S EASY THEY SAY THEY COULD LOOK AFTER THE VALLEY
THEY SAY YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE BURIED CARL THOUGH THEY BURN THEIR DEAD PEOPLE

I COULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT
YOU AREN'T HAPPY HERE. YOU MISS PEOPLE, AND THAT STUFF, DON'T YOU?
YES...YES, I SUPPOSE I DO.
I HAVE TOO MANY OF SUSAN'S MEMORIES TO BE TRULY HAPPY HERE...
AND IT ISN'T PARADISE ANY LONGER
IF IT EVER WAS
AND YOU?
THE ANIMALS AND BIRDS ARE NICE. BUT YOU CAN'T REALLY PLAY WITH THEM. THEY HAVE THEIR OWN GAMES.
I'D LIKE TO GO BACK AS WELL, I GUESS
..IF WE COULD RETURN SOMETIMES. I WOULDN'T MIND LEAVING, IF I KNEW I COULD COME BACK

YES?
...YES
NOW?
YES!

I AM GLAD THAT THIS IS OVER...
THE FLIGHT WILL BE LONG, AND TIRING, BUT I CAN CARESS THE UPDRAFTS OF THE WIND WITH MY FORM
I AM ALIVE IN THE COLORS OF THE LEAVES, AND IN THE SUNSET, AND IN THE MOIST TROPICAL AIR.
I HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE ALIVE
AND TOGETHER WE SOAR, WE CLIMB, WE ASCEND
TOGETHER
INTO THE SUN.

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